

ANTICHRIST IN ENGLISH LITERATURE 1380-1680

By

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This study examines the subject of Antichrist in English writings from about 1380 to 1680. It shows how writers took the abstract idea of antichrist described in 1 and 2 John of the Bible and attached it to the more concrete figures in the Biblical book of Revelation, calling the fusion "Antichrist." It notices the way in which authors applied this term by analogy to the pope and his hierarchy, thereby creating a line of resistance to what they considered the spiritual bondage and deception practiced by the Roman Catholic Church.

The study focuses on writers' assimilation of Antichrist into their interpretations of Scripture and on their methods for linking this figure to the Roman Church. Theologians such as John Wyclif, John Bale, and John Foxe used the term variously as a criticism of church leadership,

a crusader's banner, and a vehicle for religious argument. Secular authors such as Sir John Harington and Ben Jonson appropriated the term for witty or comic effects in imaginative literature; King James I incorporated the concept into his treatises on the divine right of English kings to be supreme in their land. Most of the fifteenth and sixteenth century writings on Antichrist stem from a theological viewpoint, but by the seventeenth century, as secular writers became more popular, theological writers and favorite themes such as Antichrist decreased in importance. This study scrutinizes writings related to or employing the term "Antichrist" as it developed, diminished, and receded.

The identification number of one Biblical figure absorbed into the concept of Antichrist was 666. A section in this study shows how certain writers blended second and third century interpretations of this number with their own and applied the results directly to the pope and his hierarchy, thus claiming further Scriptural corroboration that the pope was the Antichrist.

SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to show how the term "Antichrist" was generated, expanded, and employed by English writers from the late fourteenth to the end of the seventeenth century as a device for shaping public opinion. In general, to the common noun "antichrist" taken from two Biblical books--1 and 2 John--were added characteristics of one or more figures portrayed in the Revelation. Theological writers then identified the resulting composite, now given the proper name, "Antichrist," with the pope at Rome. By setting up a Scriptural denunciation of the pope and his hierarchy, these writers created a powerful weapon which contributed greatly to the ultimate defeat of Roman Catholic purposes in England.

Various genres are represented by the literature in this study--essay, exposition, drama, history, poetry, and translation. Essays predominate in definitive, persuasive, and political modes. Quite a few essays are transcribed philippics and jeremiads originally delivered as sermons. The detailed expository analysis in The Image of Both Churches by Bale amplifies the theme permeating even his

nonreligious works. Dramas written sixty years apart present interesting opportunities to compare and contrast the secular writings of Bale and Jonson. Bale's King John (c. 1535) (below, p. 87) combines allegorical and historical characters in a minimal plot concerning one recurring negative theme that only an audience agreeing with the author's premises would tolerate; in contrast, Jonson's The Alchemist (1610) (below, p. 182) contains an intricate plot and some well-defined characters in an entertaining offering for sophisticated Elizabethans. History is represented by Foxe's multivolume work (below, p. 101) about martyrs and martyrdom. Two works of fiction illustrate how a treatise on Antichrist might be either didactic or humorous. Here Begynneth the Byrthe and Life of the moost False and Deceytfull Antechryst (1550?) (below, p. 167) presents an inversion of Scriptural events and principles to paint Antichrist as the antithesis of Christ. In a dialogue interspersed with witty and irreverent comments, Pasquine in a Traunce (1556?) (below, p. 170) reveals the pope as Antichrist and the Roman Church as his corrupt organization. The lightness of tone and the connotations of the characters' names disguise somewhat the homiletic nature of the conversation and add dimensions not found in the work on Antichrist's "byrthe." Dialogue form is utilized by another theological writer and by one poet included here. Poems relevant to this study are of uneven quality; some possess literary merit, while some approach vicious doggerel.

A few of the works are translations which injected ideas and attitudes into English literature from Italy (Pasquine in a Traunce) and the Netherlands (A Treatise Touching Anti-Christ) (below, p. 140), thus diminishing the cultural isolation of Englishmen who could not read foreign languages. Like native English literature, these translated works made use of humor and satire as well as more direct modes of criticism.

Some regularization of lettering seemed reasonable, since modern type fonts do not include a few characters used in earlier works. Therefore, the letters "g" and "th" appear for "ȝ" and "þ" respectively. The ampersand presents no problems for typist or reader, so it is retained. Though the easy flow of comprehension may occasionally meet resistance because of early spelling, it has been largely retained. What appear to the modern reader as irregularities are mainly variations of the same word and letter substitutions. Frequently, "i" is used for "j," and "u" and "v" are often interchanged. When decided oddities in vocabulary, grammar, and manner of expression occur, I have included a convenient modernization in the notes. In spite of the difference in their English, these early writers conveyed a depth of thought that remains available to the reader four or five hundred years later. Their way of expressing ideas, though sometimes strange, is understandable and pleasing: one book

is written "for the more lernyng of smale vndirstondars" (below, p. 38), and Thomas Beard modestly discusses the reason for checking the "virilities" of the pope (below, p. 153). Once the technical and semantic variations have been clarified, the language of these early writers is highly communicative and appealing.

The roots of the concept of Antichrist in England reach back to the medieval period. This study, therefore, begins with John Wyclif's writings, a major influence on the course of the anti-Roman conflict that continued for three hundred years after his death. William Tyndale, John Bale, John Foxe, Thomas Beard, and James I were all later concerned with the same problems that engaged Wyclif's attention, but Wyclif's presentation of the problems turned out to be the most direct and uncomplicated, providing a basis for understanding later writings as they changed emphasis in response to current pressures. His writings operate as a control group to which the ideas in later writings can profitably be compared.

Wyclif's writings also exerted a major influence on anti-Roman events outside England and were carried by Jerome of Prague (d. 1416), who studied at Oxford during Wyclif's lifetime, to John Hus (1369-1415), whose work, some critics believe, greatly influenced Martin Luther (1483-1546). If one accepts this line of influence, Wyclif's writings were a germinating ground for the

Reformation, which strongly affected events in Renaissance England. These works formed the direct source for many subsequent English writers; and they also helped to bring about the Continental climate of anti-Romanism, from which English dissenters drew strength.

The Lollard writers after Wyclif are nearly all anonymous and use a rather desperate tone in response to the persecution which began in England early in the fifteenth century. These beleaguered men form the connection between Wyclif and Tyndale. They reiterated so closely the opinions first stated by Wyclif that many of their documents have been erroneously credited to him. These writers kept alive the religious protestations until the major figures of the Renaissance came along to take up the cause.

The contributions of the major theological writers are familiar to anyone interested in church history or in the development of the English Bible. Tyndale's work remains with us in some sections of the King James Version of the Bible. Foxe's work on martyrs and the official acts which allowed--even demanded--their martyrdom has been excerpted and expanded by other writers for various purposes, but Foxe's work itself is a historical treasure-trove. Bale, whose fame rests mainly on King John, contributed in his drama a picture of a decadent Roman Church and in his exposition an example of Renaissance theology.

The works of lesser known theologians, while not so impressive, were perhaps more an intimate part of the lives of the people. Many carried messages of instruction or consolation to local congregations from their particular clergyman who had been arrested and imprisoned. Many were sermons injected into the daily lives of the parishioners to explain events and to encourage perseverance in their beliefs. One unifying theme runs through each communication--the conviction that Antichrist flourished in the Roman Church.

The secular writers did not look on the question of Antichrist as the consuming issue of life. They were not concerned with its place in Scripture; instead, they used the term "Antichrist" as the basis for sensational fiction, for moral lessons, or for political leverage. Ben Jonson employed the term to generate humor. James I carried the English view of Antichrist into Continental politics.

The study ends with an examination of various solutions for the puzzle "666," a Biblical identification for one of the beasts of Revelation which became a prominent part of "Antichrist" during the period of this study. The English talent for invention which asserted itself in the variety and ingenuity of solutions supplies an additional glimpse into the scope of their intellectual and spiritual world.

I found no twentieth century book which was concerned with close investigation of Renaissance literature on Antichrist. The only book related to this study is Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England by Christopher Hill, who mentions many works which I have located and many more that I had not. Hill's work provides, however, only brief quotations from a few works and extensive discussion of none. As he deals with the seventeenth century, he traces the identification of Antichrist with, first, the Pope, then with any Catholic prelate, then with assorted Anglican churchmen, and then with every imperfect individual, so that finally "Antichrist" became a common epithet with only vague meaning.¹ Hill supports this dilution of the term by literary examples and appears to assume that the question of Antichrist lost its importance at this point. But I think it is clear that after England had settled most of her problems with Rome, neighboring countries (for example, France and Spain) were still experiencing religious conflict because the pope continued as persecutor or Antichrist to Protestants in those countries. Some Englishmen, therefore, continued to fear and resist the return of Antichrist's papal influence, particularly at times of political transition. Hill is less inclined to relate the term to the seventeenth century papacy than to its adoption in national disputes that had progressively less and less connection with Rome. In his view, the term degenerated

into little more than an item in name-calling episodes. This petty manifestation among English Protestants lay outside the central issue--England's objections to Roman influence--with which the term had been associated for at least two hundred years.

One comment by Hill helps to explain why Catholicism proved so difficult to dislodge: the ecclesiastical structure of remunerative livings retained from previous Catholic domination remained an invitation for the Papists to return to England.² The Catholics, familiar with the organizational structure of the Anglican Church, could resume their former positions with very little difficulty, as they did during the reign of Mary Tudor. Much of the attitude and ritual of the Church remained the same under both the Anglican and Roman labels.

I found one writer who agrees that the question of Antichrist in England had not disappeared by the end of the seventeenth century, but that a kind of power balance between Protestant forces and those of Antichrist had been achieved. Charles McIlwain, the editor of The Political Works of James I proposes (below, p. 204) that the battle between Catholics and Anglicans continued as long as the Catholics had any hope of regaining a hold in England and that the success of the Protestants in the Revolution of 1688 produced a stalemate which necessarily resulted in toleration on both sides.³ Had this state not been reached,

the pope, I believe, would have continued to try to gain influence in England and the struggle would have continued in some form. The idea that Englishmen needed to remain vigilant to prevent the return of the power of the pope as Antichrist to England was never discarded by some Englishmen.

The initial reason for the prominence of the term "Antichrist" lay in the oppression and persecution of dissenters practiced by the Catholic Church in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. Though as the Protestants derived and applied the term it lacked the purported Scriptural basis, it nevertheless proved useful to the cause for which it was chosen--that of lessening Roman influence in England. A quotation from The Divine Right of Kings by John Neville Figgis may explain what appears to be unreasoned convictions on the part of the reformers:

Large numbers of men may embrace belief without good reason, but assuredly they will not do so without adequate cause.⁴

The synthesis of the term "Antichrist" defies reason, but it cannot be doubted that the early writers had cause to create such a weapon as the term proved to be.

Several literary tools have proved essential in this study. For questions of vocabulary, especially in the early works, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) was used. Except where noted, Biblical quotations are from the King

James Version (KJV) because it is closely related to other and earlier English versions and because it is more readily available to present-day readers. For factual historical data, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 edition, was found to contain a great amount of information on persons and events from the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries not printed in the most recent editions.

The writers in this study display some of the attitudes important in the transition from the medieval to the modern world. They risked much to speak out individually against oppression by entrenched religious authority. They laid the perpetuation of error to the dynastic passage of authority from one corrupt papacy to the next. Though many who prominently voiced these views were put to death, other men took up the dangerous task. Of the major writers in this study, Tyndale was executed (1536) for defying the Church; and Wyclif, Bale, and Foxe knew in varying degrees what it meant to be in peril because of their anti-Roman statements. Even through the unsigned Lollard writings runs a sense that the author knew he risked his life to point out a better way to do things than had yet been tried. Without these irrepressible gestures towards new religious ideas, a segment of the Renaissance would have been truncated.

Modern civilization probably owes more to the Renaissance period than has yet been recognized. This study concerns a small portion of what that time bequeathed to us. It is

my wish that what follows will increase awareness of another Renaissance contribution to the world as we know it today.

Notes

¹Christopher Hill, Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 135.

²Hill, p. 56.

³Charles McIlwain, ed., The Political Works of James I (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1965), p. lxxix.

⁴John Neville Figgis, The Divine Right of Kings, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1922), p. 2.

SECTION TWO

ANTICHRIST IN THE BIBLE

John is the only Biblical writer to use the word "antichrist," a common noun composed in the Greek of anti, meaning "against" or "instead of," and Christos, meaning "Messiah" or "anointed one." Throughout the New Testament¹ Christos or "Christ" is used to indicate Jesus and to link him to the prophecies of Daniel (9.24-25) and Isaiah (61.1,2), and to the kingly line of the Hebrew nation (1 Sam. 16.13), as the "anointed one" who was to be the promised redeemer. We never see the prefix "anti-" linked with "Jesus," the name under which he grew up, or with "lord," a title not necessarily indicating deity. The word "Christ" occurs over five hundred times in the New Testament and appears in every book in the New Testament except 3 John, a book which deals with matters in a local church.

Having narrowed the use of the word "antichrist" to one writer, we can further narrow its occurrence to two of the five books accepted as John's by medieval and Renaissance theologians, who based their evidence on book names or style and content. The word appears in the third and

fourth smallest of the five books only five times:

Little children, it is the last hour:
and as ye have heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour. (1 John 2.18)

Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son. (1 John 2.22)

And every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already. (1 John 4.3)

For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. (2 John 1.7)

The Greek New Testament² shows the word without an article in two instances, making it a common noun; the three instances which are accompanied by the article occur as predicate nominatives related by the use of the demonstrative pronoun to a type of individual who makes a particular statement:

Παιδία, ἐσχάτη ὥρα ἐστίν καὶ

Little ones, it is a last hour, and
καθὼς ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἀντίχριστος ἔρχεται,
just as ye heard that antichrist was coming,

καὶ νῦν ἀντίχριστοι πολλοὶ γεγόνασιν.
even now many antichrists have come into being;

ὅθεν γινώσκουμεν ὅτι ἐσχάτη ὥρα ἐστίν.
 from which we know that it is a last hour.
 (1 John 2:18)

Τίς ἐστὶν ὁ ψεύστης εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀρνούμενος
 Who is the liar, if not the one who denies
 ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ Χριστός; οὗτός ἐστιν
 that Jesus is the Christ? This one is
 ὁ ἀντίχριστος, ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν πατέρα
 the antichrist, the one who denies the father
 καὶ τὸν υἱόν.
 and the son. (1 John 2:22)

καὶ πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ μὴ ὁμολογεῖ τὸν
 And every spirit that confesses not that
 Ἰησοῦν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν. καὶ τοῦτό
 Jesus is from God; even this one is the
 ἐστὶν τὸ τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου, ὃ ἀκηκόατε ὅτι
 one of the antichrist, who ye have heard is
 ἔρχεται, καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐστὶν ἤδη.
 coming, and is now already in the world.
 (1 John 4:3)

ὅτι πολλοὶ πλάνοι ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον,
 For many deceivers came into the world,
 οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον
 the ones not confessing Jesus Christ coming in
 ἐν σαρκί. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πλάνος καὶ ὁ ἀντίχριστος.
 flesh; this is the deceiver and the antichrist.
 (2 John 1:7)

From the above passages, John's views of "antichrist" may be extracted as follows:

1. The appearance of antichrists had been expected, possibly from Jesus' own prediction that "false Christs" would appear before the end of the world (Matt. 24.24).
2. Many antichrists will appear, not just one.
3. Some of them were already in the world when John wrote his books in the first century.
4. The antichrists whom John knew had first been associated with the original group of believers, but because of essential differences, they left the group: "They went out from us, but they were not of us . . ." (1 John 2.19).
5. The proliferation of antichrists is to be a sign of the imminence of the "last time"--that period which is to immediately precede the world apocalypse.
6. Some antichrists are spirits; some are men motivated by those same spirits.
7. Antichrists are deceivers and liars.
8. Specifically, an antichrist will deny
 - a. that Jesus was sent from God.
 - b. that Jesus is the Christ, the "anointed one."
 - c. that Jesus, the anointed one, appeared in human form.

d. the father-son relationship between God and Jesus.

Thus, according to John, the activity and presence of anti-christ will span all the years stretching from the first century until the "last time" or the end of world history brought about by violent events referred to by Biblical writers from Isaiah in pre-Christian times to John in the first century. This is as much as Scripture says about antichrist. (For purposes of this study, "antichrist" [uncapitalized] refers to John's usage and follows the form found in KJV [1908]; "Antichrist" refers to the term's use by all other writers.)

After John introduced the term into the Biblical vocabulary it probably was first applied to persecutors of the early Christians. Nero (37-68)³ was given this title, but since he was not a Christian, it may be assumed that he had little objection. Oliver Ormerod (1580?-1626) asserts that Jerome (340-420?) wrote against the influence of Antichrist, saying that if so-called Christians got their name from someone other than Christ, they were of the synagogue of Antichrist.⁴ In a book of Jerome's letters, two references to Antichrist occur: "Antichrist pretends to be Christ,"⁵ and "The word Satan means 'adversary,' since Christ's adversary is anti-christ, who finds Christ's precepts displeasing."⁶ Jerome's explanation of the term in the second quotation goes back to the two

Greek meanings of the preposition "anti" (below, p. 48). Jerome, seeming to view the person of Antichrist as Satan himself, understood "antichrist" to be a part of Satan's effort to neutralize or defeat Christ's purposes.

Antichrist continued to be a rather indefinite figure signifying a major adversary to God-ordained order in the world until some bishops laid claim to superiority over their peers. Other members of the clergy viewed this attempted self-elevation as contrary to Christ's teaching. By 600 A.D., the struggles for supremacy among the regional bishops caused the current bishop of Rome, Gregory I, to warn that any who "in the pride of his heart, desire to be called universall Bishop" should be called Antichrist.⁷ Three years after Gregory's death in 604, Boniface III actually assumed the title "Universal Bishop";⁸ his opponents remembered Gregory's admonition, and the combination of pope and Antichrist--made perhaps in only a few minds at first--was available as a precedent for later criticism of the papacy. Various writers have viewed Boniface's assumption of the title as the end of the true Christian religion at Rome. Robert Crowley (1518?-1588) says that gradually, in the first six hundred years after Christ, "Catholic tares" sprang up in the Church, until "the whole state did professe Antichristianisme and began to persecute such as continued in the profession of the auncient and true Catholike religion. . . ."⁹ Crowley also declares that

Gregory I was the last Roman bishop who was a true Christian, an idea reflected in the late Renaissance by John Donne (1573?-1631), writing in "Satire III":

Seek true religion. O, where? Mirreus
 [a Roman Catholic]
 Thinking her [true religion] unhoused here
 [England], and fled from us,
 Seeks her at Rome; there, because he doth know
 That she was there a thousand years ago.¹⁰

When in about 1160 the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the Cathari began to suffer persecution, they blamed the pope, calling him "Antichrist."¹¹ By the time of Wyclif, the epithet had long been applied to any pope who oppressed or abused groups disagreeing with the principles and practices of the Church of Rome. When fifteenth century writers mentioned "Antichrist," they usually referred to the pope as he acted out the qualities of a tyrant punishing his subjects for disobedience.

Perhaps during later medieval years, an unidentified writer likened this pope-Antichrist to one of the beasts in Revelation, paralleling the prophesied apocalyptic terror and bloodshed with the terror and bloodshed visited on rebellious factions by Rome. Either the original writer or someone who followed extended the concept to include the characteristics of a second Revelatory beast:

And I saw a beast coming up out of the
 sea, having ten horns and seven heads. . . .
 (Rev. 13.1b)

And they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? . . . (Rev. 13.4b)

And there was given to him [the beast] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. (Rev. 13.5-7)

The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition. (Rev. 17.8a)

And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he maketh the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast. . . . (Rev. 13.11,12)

Between them, these beasts had power to bring fire down from heaven (Rev. 13.13), to give life to an image (Rev. 13.15), to regulate buying and selling by requiring a particular mark of identification (Rev. 13.17), and to overcome the saints (Rev. 13.7). In comparing John's antichrist (above, p. 15) with the fifteenth century figure, we see that the later Antichrist had many attributes that the earlier one did not have.

In its prophecy of end-time events, the book of Daniel makes prominent mention of beasts which were taken by medieval and Renaissance writers to be identical to the

beasts in Revelation. On this basis, fifteenth century writers proceeded to refer to Old Testament beasts as freely as to the ones in the New Testament. Having carried their subject into the Old Testament, they adopted for their purposes portions of other Hebrew books. Someone else postulated that the "man of sin" and the "son of perdition" in the New Testament (2 Thess. 2.3) also pertained to the pope-Antichrist, and these juxtapositions, along with Jesus' teaching of false Christs (Matt. 24.24), provided the foundation for a host of New Testament texts. Fifteenth and sixteenth century authors supported their arguments dealing with Antichrist from this wide Biblical network, often disregarding the literal meaning of the Scripture--the level at which Wyclif had taught it should be understood. No one paused to explain why John himself would not have used the name "Antichrist" in Revelation if indeed such a character appeared in that book. The importance they gave to their subject overshadowed quibbles about its genesis. Thomas Beard (d. 1631), for example, considered the ability to identify Antichrist second only in importance to knowledge about Christ:

Next unto the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Iesus Christ, there is nothing so necessarie, as the true and solide knowledge of Antichrist, the cruelllest enemy to Christ and his members . . . As it is a notorious iniurie and outrage, to call anyone by the name of Antichrist, or to flye from him, he being not so; so it is

a palpable flattery unworthy a Christian,
to honor, reuerence, and adore as a God on
earth, him whom we ought to detest and
abhorre, as the most pernitious organe of
the diuell.¹²

Thus we see what part of Antichrist is actually found in the Bible and what has been added to that by inference and analogy. The process included peer criticism by Catholic bishops and vehement objections by persecuted victims. When we arrive at the time of our first writer, John Wyclif, the matter is still contained within the Catholic Church. Before the influence of the Church is transferred to English hands, many lives will be lost and conditions set up which have affected England in some degree ever since. Wyclif's writings begin the sequence of events involving Antichrist and England.

Notes

¹Holy Bible, King James Version (Oxford: University Press, 1908), hereafter KJV. All Biblical references in the text refer to this edition unless otherwise noted.

²The Greek New Testament, eds. Kurt Aland et al., 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Wurtemberg Bible Society, 1968).

³Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XVI, 231.

⁴Oliver Ormerod, The Picture of a Papist (1606) (University Microfilms, Reel 968, 1963), p. 185.

⁵St. Jerome, Select Letters of St. Jerome, trans. F. A. Wright (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 149.

⁶St. Jerome, p. 165.

⁷Ephraim Pagett, Christianographie, or the Description of the Multitude and Sundry Sorts of Christians in the World Not Subject to the Pope (London, 1635) (University Microfilms, Reel 968, 1963), p. 52.

⁸Ormerod, pp. 185-186.

⁹Robert Crowley, A Deliberate Answere Made to a Rash Offer, Which a Popish Antichristian Catholique Made to a Learned Protestant (as He Saieth) and Caused to be Published in Printe: Anno Do. 1575 (1587) (University Microfilms, Reel 213, 1944), p. 42.

¹⁰John Donne, The Complete Poetry of John Donne, ed. John T. Shawcross (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, 1967), p. 24.

¹¹Hill, p. 7.

¹²Thomas Beard, Antichrist the Pope of Rome (1625) (University Microfilms, Reel 1126, 1968), "To the Reader."

SECTION THREE

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL WRITERS

The writers who now engage our attention lived over a period of two hundred years. Probably educated by Catholic theologians in English universities, they all later criticized the Church in varying degrees. All wrote about the activity of Antichrist in both the English and Italian divisions of the Church. As a means of resisting Antichrist, two of these men produced early English translations of parts of the Bible, the source of many ideas which formed English culture and directly influenced English literature. Two others described events of one period when hundreds of Englishmen died for what they believed. All of them chronicled the dismay and outrage of Englishmen viewing increasing corruption and oppression from the Church to which they had looked for salvation. As each writer added accusations and embellishments, the personality of the Antichrist developed.

John Wyclif

John Wyclif (1320-1384), whose works furnish the starting point in this study, formulated the basis, or at

least provided the impetus, for nearly all the anti-Roman arguments of the following three centuries. His writings are among the earliest in English which compare activities and doctrines of the pope with those thought to be characteristic of Antichrist. Frequent targets for his criticism were the Church's traditional religious practices or beliefs, such as the meaning and method of confession or the proper duties and qualifications of priests. He wrote as a grieved family member hoping to see errors corrected rather than as a meddlesome outsider criticizing opposing opinion. The writings of Wyclif and his followers give us the background for understanding events and ideas involved in the onset of the Reformation, which in turn greatly affected the English Renaissance.

Wyclif uses the word "Antichrist" according to its grammatical roots rather than the definition given by John:

Crist hadde not propre good wher-ynne
 he shulde reste his hed; men seyn this
 pope hath more than half of the empire
 with-uten his spuyling. Crist was moost
 meke & moost seruysable & girte hym with
 a cloth & wayschide his disciplis feet,
 as the gospel of ioon tellith; the pope
 sittith in his troone & makith lordis to
 kisse his feet. Crist wente mekely fro
 plase to place & prechide the gospel &
 taughte pouert; the pope dwellith in
 auyoun & doith not this but the contrarie.
 & so sith that anticrist is he that is
 agenus crist, it semyth bi his feyned lif
 that he is opyn anticrist.¹

When writers before Wyclif used the word "Antichrist," they almost always connected it in some way with the abuses of the Church against dissenting groups or individuals. By the time Wyclif writes, the growing prominence of the pope has exposed him to criticisms such as those directed at him by Wyclif, who designates the pope "Antichrist" because of specific contradictions in the pope's teachings to those of Christ. Wyclif's characterization of the pope set the pattern for subsequent English writers.

Had Wyclif been writing a century later, he would most likely not have died as he did in his own bed; he certainly would not have been free to produce the works which so intimately influenced and inspired the later antipapists. Except for a few official attempts to question him, Wyclif seemed to be free to write in England without fear for his life, a privilege not widely enjoyed by critics of the Church on the Continent. While Wyclif was receiving a prebend for his services in the Catholic Church, he disagreed with Rome over political elements in the hierarchical system of the Church; he may himself have been a victim of this system early in his career.² He developed strong objections to the amount of money being sent from England to Rome and from there, sometimes, to England's political opponents:

Prelatis ouere this robben oure lond of
 mochil tresour & senden it to aliens &
 enemys of oure rewme & bryngen agen goddis
 curs & heresie.³

Increasingly, Wyclif dealt with spiritual matters. Tied to the political question of revenue for Rome were questions of corruption in the Church. In a continuation of the excerpt quoted above, he deplores some of the reasons for which money was sent to Rome: to buy spiritual benefits (simony), or worse yet, to buy exemptions from the penalty of premeditated sins. Wyclif believed that these practices directly violated God's laws.

For thei don not here spiritual offis
 aftir goddis lawe, & yit gredely gedren
 dymes & offryngis & procuracies, & senden
 moche gold coine for the firste fruytis,
 & to purchase & apropre to hem moo benefices,
 preuylgies & indulgences; & this is thefte
 & symonye yif goddis lawe & mannus & reson
 be sougt, & the sillere of benefices &
 spiritual thingis & the geuere of gold for
 hem ben cursed of god & man & ben foule
 heretiks. & sumtyme the court of rome is
 worldly aduersarie to oure lond, & namely
 in fauour of oure enemys; but more harme
 is of gostly ennemyte, whanne thei
 enuenumen oure peple with cursed symonye
 and meyntenynge & consent of synne bi
 blynde obedience. For yif ony worldly
 prelat wole do ony wrong agenst rigt &
 reson, he schal geten a priueilege or
 exempcion or sentence of curs for his gold
 sent & spendid at rome, & moche gold goth
 out of oure lond bi longe pledynge at rome,
 & rigt born a doun, & synne contyned &
 meyntened, that vnnethis dar ony man speke
 theragenst; and thus is our lond robbid of
 gold, & curs & heresie brought in, and synne
 longe meyntened, & rigtwisnesse stoppid.⁴

Wyclif came to the conclusion that righteousness was the only justification for claiming title to authority or property, and that unrighteous clergy had no right to either. And from his view, many of the clergy were not righteous. He mentions a startling catalogue of sins in which he says some were involved; he declares that Satan tempts young priests to covetousness and lust and offers them wealth and various sexual activities, leading some to set up elaborate domestic establishments in contradiction to their vows and to God's laws:

For many preistis now kepen neither
matrimonye ne charite, but defoulen
wyues, maidenen, widewis & nunnes in
eche manere of lecherie, & children ben
morthrid, & synne agenst kynde is not
clene fled. For sathanas caste to
purchase worldly honour & plente of
worldly goddis & welfare & ydelnesse
to yonge prestis, & dalliaunce with
wommen & priue rownyng; & is redy nyght
& day to stere both partis to leccherie,
& sumtyme to hyden here synne bi fals
othis & motheryng of children, & sumtyme
haunten it opynly & schamen not ther-of;
& her-bi heigh prelatis wynnyn many
thousand pondis in fewe yeris & holden
grete housholde as lordis, & thus by this
ypocrisie in bothe poyntis ben lordis &
prestis & communes encombrid, & goddis
lawe dispisid & broken & synnes gedred
in grete hordis.⁵

Following this passage, Wyclif discusses deeper questions of doctrine, clarifies his differences with the Church, and offers principles of discernment for those unaccustomed to thinking for themselves on theological matters.

Wyclif did not, as so many did later, wrest Scripture out of context to prove his arguments. He presents what he considers to be a malpractice on the part of the Church or the pope and then shows the Scriptural basis for his objections. In his discussion of confession, he says that Antichrist, the pope, directs men to confess their sins to priests, who, the pope says, have power to forgive them as was shown by Christ when he ordered his disciples to loose the burial wrappings at the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Wyclif did not believe Scripture gave one man the power to forgive another man's sin; so refuting what the Church taught, he explains in "Of Confession" that men certainly were exhorted to confess their sins to each other, not to obtain forgiveness, but to remind each man of his own frailty in the face of Satan's temptations. This confession should be reciprocal, without one person's setting himself up as better than the others. Those who claimed superior virtue or power over sin Wyclif calls "emperor prelates," referring mainly to the priests. Did not Christ say that anyone who elevated himself should be lowered? These emperor priests should be lowered according to Christ's words. What Christ meant, says Wyclif, by the disciples' loosing of the bonds of Lazarus was that through preaching the gospel priests should teach men how to loose themselves from sinful habits; only Christ can raise dead bodies and only Christ can give sinners spiritual life by

forgiving their sins. Wyclif points out that John the Baptist preached confession of sins, but the Scripture in that place does not say that confession had to be made either to John or a priest.⁶

In this discussion Wyclif relies on Scriptural support in a way strikingly different from many later writers considered in this study. He speaks from the epistle of James but gives no chapter and verse designation. He does not pull out phrases which in their excised state support his arguments, but he refers instead to James' idea within its completed statement, opening his own argument to the sense and meaning of the whole book of James. In the section on confession Wyclif preserves the literal unity of the Scriptural accounts of Lazarus and John Baptist throughout his interpretation. Some later writers avoided the inclusion of even one complete verse of Scripture to support an argument, because their support came from a short phrase useful only if set apart from its context. There is in Wyclif's writings a sanity and an unforced use of ideas wholly lacking in the superficial cleverness and confusing illogicalities of the fanatic. Most of his arguments are based on wide knowledge of the Bible and sound thinking rather than on popular clichés and unsupportable inherited assumptions.

In discussing the pope's office, Wyclif contrasts the pope's anti-Christian life of riches with Christ's poverty:

. . . it semeth . . . that the pope is
 anticrist heere in erthe. For he is
 agenys crist bothe in lif & in lore.
 Crist was moost pore man fro his birthe
 to his deth, & lefte worldly richees &
 beggyng, aftir the staat of innocense;
 but anticrist agenys this, fro the tyme
 that he be maad pope til the tyme that
 he be deed heere, coueytith to be worldly
 riche, & castith bi manye shrewid weyes
 hou that he may thus be riche.⁷

Wyclif amasses additional evidence of Antichrist in the pope as he contrasts the pope's pride in allowing his feet to be kissed by lords with Christ's humility in washing his disciples' feet, the pope's isolation in a castle with Christ's free movement among common men, and the pope's restrictions on spiritual rewards with Christ's diligence in preaching to men of all ranks. Wyclif says the pope convinces men to hold his laws more important than Christ's, thereby causing men to omit those things necessary for salvation. Besides deceiving men, the pope carries out vengeance on any who resist him, whereas Christ prayed for his enemies. In all these things, the pope sought his own glory rather than God's, thereby proving himself "very anticrist & not cristis viker heere."⁸

Wyclif hoped that the Great Schism of 1378 would destroy the people's trust in the papacy. He thought the people, doubting the authenticity of either pope, would perhaps learn to follow men only as they followed Christ. But he feared that the popes would divert attention from

their deceptions by involving men in wars resulting from papal disputes. If the nations, however, would resist the popes' demands, they would have an opportunity to re-evaluate their beliefs, and in addition, they would be relieved of the financial burdens imposed by the Church. The Schism was "medicyn" sent from God to reveal the falsehood of Antichrist, if nations and men would only heed it.⁹

Wyclif's writings provided an important and durable impetus picked up and carried by other men toward the Reformation. It is known that Jerome of Prague studied at Oxford in 1398 while strong supporters of Wyclif were still there and that he made copies of some of Wyclif's major works. Later, returning to Prague, he became the friend of John Hus, who then adopted many of Wyclif's ideas, using excerpts from Wyclif's writings in his own. Both Jerome and Hus were martyred for their refusal to reject beliefs very similar, if not identical, to those found in Wyclif's writings. Hus's writings eventually influenced Luther, whose beliefs culminated directly in the Protestant Reformation.¹⁰

As the first in a line of Englishmen who effectively spoke out against religious corruption and oppression, Wyclif presented many of the ideas that reappear in the works of writer after writer through the Catholic-Protestant struggle. As we shall see next, his Lollards spread his doctrine too widely for the Church to eradicate it and

promoted the coinciding interest of layman and theologian that Rome could not ignore. Wyclif's ideas persisted though some men died because they adopted them. The religious revolution which became a part of the Renaissance in England can be traced directly to Wyclif's introduction to the English people of the pope as Antichrist. In the next century, men with somewhat less literary skill but with equal courage assumed the task begun by Wyclif.

Post-Wyclif Lollard Writers

Before he died, Wyclif sent men who carried his ideas and his writings throughout much of England. These men and those who followed came to be called "Lollards" or "Lollers" about the time of Wyclif's death.¹¹ They were recognized by their possession of English books and Scriptures and by their opposition to the pope. The Lollards were so closely connected with the English Bible that Reginald Pecock (1395-1460) called them "Bible men."¹² The possession of English books was in itself reason for suspicion of Lollardy.¹³ After the passage of Archbishop Arundel's "Constitutions" (1409), vernacular Scriptures translated during Wyclif's time were illegal and figured in many trials for heresy.

Lollard belief that the pope was Antichrist is abundantly evident. A 1499 record of a Salisbury heresy trial

involving two parish priests included their statement that "the Pope is antecrist."¹⁴ The manuscript which is the source of An Apology for Lollard Doctrines (late fourteenth or early fifteenth century) contains three other treatises on Antichrist: "De Christo et Antichristo," "Of anticrist, and his meynee [family]," and "Of antecristis song in chirche." The Apology itself discusses the pope as Antichrist, an analogy based on the pope's divergence from Biblical standards, known to the Lollards from their reading of English Scriptures. After a wide study of manuscript and printed sources, a twentieth century scholar, John Thomson, states that one of the two most important aspects of Lollard doctrine was their antipapal stance, epitomized in their frequent use of the epithet "Antichrist."¹⁵

The Church countered by trying to stop the spread of Biblical knowledge, burning offensive books, and persecuting offending Lollards. Most, if not all, Lollard trials involved possession of English Scriptures, since "the chief question at issue was always the testing of some doctrine by an appeal to the letter of the New Testament."¹⁶ Lollards brought to trial for unorthodox views regarding the nature of the Sacrament consistently defended themselves with words from the English Testament.

In spite of formidable opposition, Lollards continued to speak of the pope as Antichrist. Using their newly acquired Biblical insights they began to aver that worldwide

religious jurisdiction had never been instituted in the Scriptures;¹⁷ that if anyone had maintained widespread influence in the early Church, it was Paul, not Peter; that if the office of pope were justifiable, it should be filled by the most virtuous man alive; and that if the pope were to be Christ's vicar, he should carry out the commandments and principles of his superior. Each one of these points was enlarged in various polemical essays which stated repeatedly that Christ alone is the head of the Church, and if the pope abrogates this position he is "a blasphemer and Lucifer and antecrist."¹⁸ Had God instituted the papacy by choosing the best possible human being, Paul, not Peter, would have been first pope, they argued. Peter's uneven Biblical career includes denying Christ, losing faith on the water-walk, and being called "Satan" by Jesus--all dubious recommendations for a religious leader. Peter's admirable accomplishments were all surpassed by those of Paul in his traveling, writing, preaching, and suffering for the gospel. Paul's gift of wisdom seemed to one Lollard greater than that given to Peter.¹⁹ When Lollard writers pointed out individually and generally the lapses in the lives of popes since Peter, the Church, unable to deny the allegations, countered with the doctrine that, even if a priest or pope was sinful, his services remained efficacious (below, p. 106)--a doctrine further violating Lollard belief. A statement by a Wyclif contemporary affirms the scope of

Lollard beliefs:

The sect is held in such great honour these days, and has so multiplied, that you can hardly see two men passing in the road, but one of them shall be a disciple of Wycliffe.²⁰

Though Lollard leadership fell apart after the execution of Sir John Oldcastle in 1419, the following evidence verifies an industrious production of Lollard books and pamphlets:

1. The amount of work that went into the careful handcopying of these works implies financial support to an organization of some magnitude.
2. A large number of books on religion and philosophy appear as references in remaining literature.
3. Critical remarks made by Lollard opponents show widespread awareness of Lollard works.
4. The supply of Lollard books was sufficient to fuel numerous bonfires.²¹

Anne Hudson believes that the works which influenced English thought throughout the fifteenth century and beyond were copies of works written early in the century.²² Eventually, some were printed by early reformers after the invention of the printing press. Many sixteenth and seventeenth century Puritan treatises retain characteristic Lollard phrases and catchwords.²³ Tyndale's essays frequently reflect Lollard thought, and his determination to make the

Scripture generally available extends Lollard goals into the sixteenth century. Though few Lollards writers can be named, the existence and influence of their works are not to be doubted. Admittedly unremarkable for literary polish, they, nevertheless, carry in an unbroken line from Wyclif to Tyndale the idea that the pope is antithetical to Christ.

Lollards extended the epithet "Antichrist" beyond the pope to the hierarchy making up his organization, as the following typical excerpt explains:

I calle antecrist al the confederacie
of hem that agens Crist and aboue his
gospel magnyfien mennys tradiciouns and
lawis for wynnyng and delicat lijf, and
bisily doen execucioun of her owne wille
and comaunding, not reckinge of the
heestis of God and his lawe.²⁴

Their bitter opposition to the local prelacy at times overshadowed their enmity toward the pope. Friars were said to be of the house of Caym (Cain), the first murderer. "Caym" stands for the initials of four orders of friars: Carmelites, Augustinians, Jacobites (Dominicans), and Minorites (Franciscans).²⁵ Archbishops and bishops received a fair share of Lollard invective as well.

Increasingly an accusatory tone permeated their doctrinal discussions. The epithet "Antichrist," frequently voiced in this phase of Lollard expression, reflects the growing hostility to rising opposition in the surrounding

society. Their essays contain specious, fearful, and hysterical statements that often divert attention from illogical or ill-founded arguments supported by parts of Scripture taken carefully out of context. Instead of citing one or two texts for support, they give numerous references in what may have been either an attempt to overwhelm any possible objections or simply a medieval exercise in list-making. The implied divine approval in the theologians' use of seemingly corroborative Scripture proved an effective barrier to counterarguments. Then, too, before a critic could address the real issue of the works, he had to successfully dispose of the many Scriptures in which the premises were imbedded and avoid being snared in side issues brought to mind by the references. As a result, the more the writings on the Antichrist became layered in specific, if oblique or nonrelevant, Scriptural references, the more the Lollard idea of Antichrist was protected from close scrutiny and the harder it became to test the validity of the idea itself. The general unacceptability of any anti-Christian person or attitude in medieval or early Renaissance society was such that few writers succeeded in lifting a discussion of that person or attitude out of the emotional sphere onto a scholarly, objective level. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it became easier to get rid of the writer or his disciples than to keep Lollard works from flourishing even though they might be emotional and illogical.

Of the post-Wyclif writings, The Lanterne of Ligt is one of the most interesting. Some think the book is Wyclif's, but in the preface to her study, Lillian Swinburn presents evidence to show that it was certainly produced after the passage of Arundel's "Constitutions" in 1409--at least twenty-five years after Wyclif's death in 1384. The book was copied widely for secret circulation, figuring in the condemnation of at least one man to the martyr's stake. John Claydon, though illiterate, was burned in 1415 after being tried for listening to a friend's reading of the book and for agreeing with its principles.²⁶

The author of Lanterne, writing "for the more lernynge of smale vndirstondars,"²⁷ refers to Antichrist as follows:

For now the devel hath marrid this world
bi his leeftenaunt anticrist . . . The
enemy of God hath sowen taaris upon the
seed of Jesu Crist. This wicked man is
anticrist.²⁸

Reflecting the restrictions placed on the Lollards in 1409, the writer says:

There shal no man preche Goddis word
in thoo daies neither heere it but if he
have a special letter of lisenche that is
clepid the mark of this beest anticrist.
. . .²⁹

In the first excerpt, Antichrist is personified as a subordinate of Satan, the one who, as the "enemy of God," sowed tares among the "seed of Jesus Christ," or his true

followers. The writer alludes to the parable (Matt. 13.24-30) which Jesus explained (vv. 36-43) as a picture of the devil's propagation of his wicked children among the children of God. This characterization is congruent with John's ideas of Antichrist.

In the second of the above excerpts the writer sets "Antichrist" in apposition to a beast described in the Revelation, allowing Antichrist now to possess all the attributes of the beast, thus acquiring an individual personality. The writer disregards the fact that the word "Antichrist" does not appear in the Revelation; furthermore, he overlooks the complete disparity of purposes attributed by John to the beasts and antichrist while each is in the world. The only common element, if one adheres to the Scriptures, is that they all belong to the kingdom of Satan. The beasts are to be world rulers, to be worshipped universally, to regulate economics, to perform miracles, and to appear in history as the "last time" approaches, and not before. John's antichrist seeks only to form opinion.

Chapter 3 of Lanterne discusses the "general" definition of Antichrist:

To speke in general, that is in moost in
comune, anticrist is euery man that lyueth
agan Crist, as seint Ion seith.³⁰

The writer arrives at his independent definition by first

giving the root meaning of the word "Antichrist" ("every man that lives against Christ"), following with a partial quotation ("Now are many antichrists"--1 John 2.18), and then quoting from St. Augustine ("Who liveth contrary to Christ, he is an antichrist"). While giving John as the authority for his statement, the writer uses Augustine's definition to support his belief that an Antichrist reveals itself by its actions and affiliations just as true Christians display characteristic behavior. Looking at the conflicts around him, the author sees Antichrist in the courts and the Church.

Having equated John's antichrist with the beasts of Revelation, the Lanterne writer then connects this "beest antichrist" with the prophecies of Daniel in which beasts similar to those in Revelation also appear. Because he thus places Antichrist in the Old Testament as well as the New, he can thereby include in his exposition many Old Testament prophecies related to those in Revelation. Some other writers were more careful to explain the relationship of John's antichrist to other parts of Scripture, and some made other connections which will be considered later.

Chapter 4 of Lanterne presents a description which the author calls a "particular" definition of Antichrist. He says that David's Psalms contain a prophecy supporting five points to show how Antichrist assaults God's people:

1. by constitution;
2. by tribulation;
3. by Inquisition;
4. by persecution;
5. by execution.³¹

All of these five were operating in the society of which the Lollards and other dissenters during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were a part; but to say that David was prophesying specifically about those centuries or about Antichrist forced the passage out of context.

In discussing the first point, the author begins with a quotation from Psalms and then applies the verse to the conditions around him:

"Lord suffre thou to ordeyne a lawemaker vpon the peple, in peyne of her synne. For thei wole not consent to the trouthe." That is thus to mene, Anticrist vseth fals lucratif or wynnyng lawis as ben absoluciouns, indulgence, pardouns, priuelegis, & alle othir heuenli tresour, that is brought in to sale for to spoile the peple of her worldli goodis & principali thise newe constituciouns, bi whos strengthe anticrist enterditith chirchis, soumneth prechours, suspendith resceyuours, & priueth hem ther bennefice, cursith heerars, & takish away the goodis of hem that fortheren the precheing of a prest, ghe thoug it were an aungel of heuene, but if that prest schewe the mark of the beest, the whiche is turned in to a newe name & clepid a special lettir of lisenche for the more blyndyng of the lewid peple.³²

In Psalm 9, the given source of the quotation, the words

attributed to David were a plea for a righteous leader who could overthrow the wicked. The Lanterne author turns David's request to the Lord into a prophecy of Antichrist, injecting current regulations by the Roman Church against dissenting Christians into the interpretation of the chapter. Where David's tone was one of supplication, the Lanterne's author changes the meaning so that the tone becomes one of accusation.

The discussion of the five points mentioned previously inveighs against a current practice or abuse approved or carried out by the Church--pilgrimages, prohibition of Bible reading in English, greed of priests, and execution of martyrs, all of which were allowed or perpetrated by the Roman Church. But the forced use of Scripture verses purporting to show prophesied disapproval is a far departure from Wyclif's method of disagreement with the Church.

The Lanterne author does not hesitate to add whatever suits him to verses of Scripture. His method, as seen in the discussion on constitutions, is to quote a verse of Scripture and then discuss it. Usually he quotes in Latin and follows with an English translation, sometimes with startling additions. Speaking of Antichrist's persecution of Christians (above, p. 41, point 4), he quotes the following verse:

Vidi de ore draconis et de ore bestie
et de ore pseudoprophete spiritus tres
immundos exisse in modum ranarum. [Rev.
 16.13]³³

The Lanterne author translates the passage as follows:

I saw seith seint Ion out of the mouthe
 of the dragoun, that is the heed of anti-
 crist, & out of the mouthe of the beest,
 that is the bodi of anticrist, & out of
 the mouthe of the pseudo-prophete or fals
 prechour, that is the taile of anticrist,
 thre vnclean spiritis to have passid out
 in the maner of froggis.³⁴

Here the writer implies that the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet together make up the Antichrist: he emphasizes the anatomical comparisons made earlier between Antichrist and the Roman Church in which the head of Antichrist is "an old or honored man in the court of Rome,"³⁵ his body or the seat (in its most unflattering sense) is composed of archbishops and bishops,³⁶ and the tail comprises monks, canons, and friars.³⁷ Though Isaiah 9.15, his given reference for this analysis, says nothing about either Antichrist or Rome, the author pulls the word "head" and "tail" from the reference where they apply to the nation of Israel. He speaks next from 2 Peter of false teachers as opponents of Christ, and though the word "Antichrist" does not appear, it is more clearly implied in this place than in many of the other passages referred to. Yet he merely touches on this reference and continues

to other less applicable verses, generally ignoring the contexts of the excerpted portions.

If the exaggerations and additions ultimately weaken the impact of the work, the author's use of imagery serves to strengthen it. The passage on the frogs emphasizes a vivid picture of clerical sin:

Froggis sitting in hoolis bi the watir-
brink purchassen of the ground abouen
hem & on either side hem. But that that
is vndirnethen hem thei wole not her
thankis, neither leesen it ne loosen it.
So thise thre spiritis croking in coueitis,
glotenie & leccherie bitokenen anticrist
in hise thre partise. For thei pur-
chassen of lordis, that ben abouen hem,
miche parte of her good with the tung of
flatering & feyned ypocrisie. And of the
comunes abouten hem, thei whiglen in to
her handis miche parte of her catel. But
that that thei han wonnen, thei holden
fast agen the autorite of bothe Goddis
lawes.³⁸

The picture of three fat frogs croaking greedily in their mud puddle shows something of the reason for the common man's impotent resentment against the Church's assumed right to confiscate from dissenters their lands and possessions.

The Lanterne writer is concerned with protecting Christ's true flock against whom Antichrist is warring from being weakened by evil of any sort. To strengthen their resistance, he compares familiar experiences to the seven deadly sins: as tempests are perilous for the

fisherman's net, so pride is dangerous to Christ's Church; as the water of the sea is bitter and sour to the taste, so envy and hate are as bitter and as damaging to cordial relations among men; as storms with sudden winds grieve fishermen, so wrath causes much sorrow in the world; no grass or flower grows where the sea touches, just as sloth kills the flower of virtue in man; the sea reaches out to take whatever it can, just as covetousness prompts men to grasp without thankfulness; the sea belches filth, as lechery causes men to defoul themselves, whose bodies are God's temple; the sea sometimes drowns men upon it, as gluttony drowns those who practice it. Thus the writer encourages his fellow-Christians to remain strong that they might more effectively resist Antichrist's assaults. The Lanterne author's skill in attaching visual reinforcement to abstract ideas and in maintaining an extended metaphor must certainly have contributed to the popularity of his book and the spread of his ideas.

The Lollard tract in James Henthorn Todd's An Apology for Lollard Doctrines adheres closely to the usual Lollard arguments against un-Biblical Church practices, unsuitability of priests, and superstition in the Church. Point by point the tract shows how the pope opposes himself to Christ. The author is also concerned about how corrupt doctrine affects the man in the pew. He deplores the granting of indulgences by parish priests to praying worshippers hoping

to accrue as many as ten thousand years of pardon; for, says the author,

. . . by suelk sophymis of anticrist, the
lawe of God is despicið, and rigtful is
put in veyn hope, and vpon ilk side a
liuar in this world is falsely iapid
. . . And alle feynid arguments of
anticrist are not worthi to be rehersid.³⁹

For some pages the discussion goes on without specific mention of Antichrist, but eventually a more comprehensive statement about Antichrist is made:

This a nother poynt, that the pope,
cardinalis, bischopis, and other
prelats benethe, are disciplis of
anticrist, and sellars of merit . . .
Therefor who that usith swilk werks is
disciple of anticrist, and anticrist . . .
Ilk one contrary to Crist is anticrist,
and the tung a lone is not to be axid,
but the lif . . . Whoever is contrari
to the doctrin, and to the word of God,
he is anticrist. . . .⁴⁰

Other criteria for identifying Antichrist follow, all based on Scriptural principles or authorities such as St. Augustine (354-430) and Robert Grossthead, Bishop of Lincoln (1235-1253), who opposed the legal power of the Roman Church. Augustine is supposed to have said, "Ilk man axe her his conciens wether he be anticrist."⁴¹ Lincoln is purported to have said, "Scheperds, clepid the persoun of the verray scheperd Ihu Crist, nought schewing the gospel, thof thei ekid [added] not other malice ouer, they

are anticrists."⁴² Predating Wyclif by one hundred years, Lincoln already ties Antichrist to churchmen who neglect the Scriptures. The Church's strenuous attempts to prohibit Scripture reading by lay persons is directly tied to Lollard use of the Scriptures in criticizing the Church.

Thomson's account in The Later Lollards 1414-1520 reveals the persistence through the fifteenth century of basic Lollard beliefs, even though no new Lollard leaders emerged and though (if Hudson is correct) the sect lacked original writers after 1425.⁴³ Trials for Lollardy took place at intervals throughout this time because of continuing resistance to the Church. Along with other familiar objections to doctrine or practices, the prisoners repeatedly admitted to the courts that they believed the pope to be Antichrist.⁴⁴ Occasionally a novel criticism appears in the literature: one prisoner said that the Church as an organization was the beast of the Revelation;⁴⁵ another said that the cross was the sign of Antichrist;⁴⁶ one called the pope "Father Antichrist";⁴⁷ and one claimed that churchbells were "antecristis hornes."⁴⁸ The vigor of Lollard beliefs in the sixteenth century is an indication of their initial strength, though it hardly explains the contagious appeal of a doctrine that led ultimately to disgrace, impoverishment, or death.

The literature of this post-Wyclif period is not without its elements of confusion. Some writers disagreed--not

on whether it was logical to bring a term from 1 John into Revelation, but on which of the two Revelation beasts the title "Antichrist" should properly be settled, or whether Antichrist was really the False Prophet spoken of in the same book. Some writers were using "ante-," the prefix meaning "before," instead of "anti-," meaning "against" or "instead of," thus further clouding the understanding of the term "Antichrist." In fact, Bibles in print during the next century still contained both spellings. The Great Bible (1540)⁴⁹ shows the word spelled "Antechrist" or "Antechriste" three times out of the five occurrences. (The 1550 edition⁵⁰ spells them all using "anti-.") The Bible in Englyshe (1541)⁵¹ uses "ante-" in the same three instances. Coverdale's Bible (1550)⁵² spells all five with "anti-." Whether this irregularity is just another instance of unstandardized spelling or whether it indicates differing opinion as to the meaning of the term, the variations perpetuated confusion. In 1589, Lambert Danaeus wrote to clarify this disparity:

. . . Speaking against some that were ignorant in the Greek tongue, he [Augustine] reasoneth thus, that Antichrist is not so called, for that [because] he should come before Christ (whereupon they harped by misunderstanding the word,) but for that [because] he should prove contrarie to Christ and his word, . . . the word [antichrist] being Greek, not Latin.⁵³

Danaeus, trying to correct the current and previous frequent misspelling, quoted St. Augustine who had recognized a similar problem in the fifth century.

We have considered some works by representatives of an anonymous group who continued after Wyclif's death to spread his precepts in sermons and books. The resulting disagreements with Rome sprang directly from the Lollards' familiarity with the written Scriptures, the availability of which Rome discouraged through extreme measures, if necessary. In spite of the danger, another writer determined to give the English people a Bible they could read to free themselves from the ignorance that allowed the Roman Church as Antichrist to deceive them.

William Tyndale

William Tyndale (1490-1536), writing about one hundred years after Wyclif's works had been banned, found reason to criticize the Roman Church for some of the same practices and doctrines deplored by his predecessor 125 years before. He concluded that the Church had shown very little disposition to change in response to critics and reformers, for it was still composed of

. . . malicious and wily hypocrites, which are so stubborn and hard-hearted in their wicked abominations, that it is not possible for them to amend anything at all, (as we see by daily experience, when both their livings and doings are rebuked with truth,). . . .⁵⁴

I have also uttered the wickedness of the spirituality, the falsehead of the bishops, and juggling of the pope, . . . and how they have put out God's testament, . . . and set up their own traditions and lies.⁵⁵

With this opinion as incentive, he set out to accomplish what other reformers had sought to do--defeat Antichrist by making the Scriptures available to Englishmen.

Tyndale believed that Antichrist resided in the Roman Church because it carried out persecutions, taught false doctrine, and suppressed the truth by inadequately preparing its clergy and by prohibiting Scripture reading. Though none of these reasons originated with Tyndale, he added his own peculiar expression to each one.

The most convincing evidence supporting his position lay in the persecutions which had been going on for a hundred years in England by the time Tyndale was a young man. His essay "The Revelation of Antichrist" directly identifies Antichrist on this basis:

I will show thee an evident reason, that thou mayest know without doubting who is the very Antichrist: and this argument may be grounded upon their furious persecution, which Paul doth confirm, writing to the Galatians. We, dear brethren, are the children of promise, as Isaac was; not the sons of the bondwoman, as Ishmael. But, as he that was born after the flesh did persecute him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Mark Paul's reason. By Isaac, are signified the elect; and by Ishmael, the reprobate. Isaac did not persecute Ishmael; but, contrary, Ishmael did persecute Isaac. Now let us make our reason:

All they that do persecute as Ishmael,
 be reprobates and Antichrists.
 But all the popes, cardinals, bishops,
 and their adherents, do persecute.
 Therefore all the popes, cardinals,
 bishops, and their adherents, be
 Ishmael; reprobates and Antichrists.

I ween our syllogismus is well made, and
 in the first figure.⁵⁶

The false doctrine to which Tyndale mainly objected concerned the teaching that salvation depended heavily on the believer's work. He claimed that this doctrine was a manifestation of Antichrist within the Church:

And he [St. John] writeth sore against a sect of heretics, which then began to deny that Christ was come in the flesh, and calleth them very antichrists; which sect goeth now in her full swing. For though they deny not openly, with the mouth, that Christ is come in the flesh, yet they deny it in the heart, with their doctrine and living. For he that will be justified and saved through his own works, the same doth as much as he that denied Christ to be come in flesh, seeing that Christ came only therefore in the flesh, that he should justify us . . . with his works only, and with his blood-shedding, without and before all our works. (Tyndale, p. 166)

Tyndale returned frequently to this concept of meritorious works as one of the major Antichristian deceptions perpetrated on the people by the Church:

And yet in these works they have so great confidence, that they not only trust to be saved thereby, and to be higher in heaven than they that be

saved through Christ, but also promise to all other forgiveness of their sins through the merits of the same; wherein they rest, and teach other to rest also, excluding the whole world from the rest of forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ's blood. (Tyndale, p. 69)

[They] teach us to put our trust in our own works for the remission and satisfaction of our sins. . . . (Tyndale, p. 190)

Faith of works was the darkness of the false prophets, out of the which the true could not draw them. Faith of works was the blindness of the Pharisees, out of the which neither John Baptist nor Christ could bring them. (Tyndale, p. 279)

But thou, reader, think of the law of God, how that it is . . . never fulfilled with deeds or works. . . . (Tyndale, p. 867)

Tyndale argued that belief in salvation by works and belief in salvation by faith in Christ were mutually exclusive and that holders of the works theory were dupes of Antichrist. Agreeing with Luther, Tyndale accepted salvation through grace alone, a position Wyclif would have been reluctant to join.

Another false doctrine deplored by Tyndale dealt with the elevation of Mary and the saints to a level nearly equal to that of Christ. Mixing wit with criticism, Tyndale describes how Antichrist downgrades Christ with the doctrine which says that

. . . he [Christ] was a holy prophet, and that he prayeth for us as other saints do; save that we Christians think that he is

somewhat more in favour than other saints be (though we imagine him so proud, that he will not hear us but through his mild mother and other holy saints, which all we count much more meek and merciful than he, but him most of might), and that he hath also an higher place in heaven, as the Grey friars and Observants set him, as it were from the chin upward, above St. Francis. (Tyndale, p. 183)

His sarcastic presentation of carefully measured heavenly position reflects the view of many reformers who believed that Jesus was the only intermediary necessary between God and man and any additional requirements for approaching God sprang from Antichrist.

In addition to the outright teaching of false doctrine, the Church, Tyndale said, suppressed the truth of the Scriptures that would have enabled the people to recognize falsities. Priests were not taught how to understand Scripture and could not transmit its teachings to their congregations:

In the Universities they have ordained that no man shall look on the Scripture until he be noselled [nursed] in heathen learning eight or nine years, and armed with false principles with which he is clean shut out of the understanding of the Scripture. (Tyndale, p. xv)

"Heathen learning" refers to the study of systematized logic, philosophy, and theology based on the principles of Aristotle's Logic and Metaphysics. Tyndale felt that by the time the priests completed this portion of their

studies, their whole approach to Scripture was already prejudiced by acquired thought processes and disdain for uncomplicated literal understanding. The education of medieval priests who did not attend a university was even worse, according to Archbishop John Peckham (d. 1292) and Giraldus Cambrensis (d. 1220).⁵⁷ They were not required to know much about the Bible,⁵⁸ but they had to be able to say and sing a Latin mass.⁵⁹ Requirements for some levels of the clergy appear to have been based on ability to perform the mass rather than on knowledge of the Scripture.

The corrupting of student priests through the teaching of scholastic theology, Tyndale says, resulted in inanities:

Of what text thou provest hell, will
another prove purgatory; another limbo
patrum; and another the assumption of
our lady; and another shall prove of
the same text that an ape hath a tail.
(Tyndale, p. 330)

He decried the Church's attitude that Scripture could be molded to fit whatever purpose suited the Church:

They need not to regard the scripture,
but to do and say as their Holy Ghost
moveth them; and if scripture be contrary,
then make it a nose of wax, and wrest it
this way and that way, till it agree.
(Tyndale, p. 279)

In his wax nose figure Tyndale pictures the extreme result of the Church's withdrawal of more and more doctrines from

the understanding of ordinary people. He laments the Church's policy of employing fantastical mysteries rather than literal meaning to explain contradictions between Scripture and Church doctrine. The deepest concern of the clergy, Tyndale declared, lay not in the plain teaching of the Bible, as it should. If, as he believed, the Scripture was God's word, it should regulate the Church, and not the other way around. If the Bible says that Christ is the head of the Church, then his teachings should be followed. Anyone changing or defying those teachings because of greed or self-interest was Antichrist, according to Tyndale. One reason he thought the clergy were reluctant to make the Bible known was to protect the esoteric aspects of their profession:

What then saith my lord of Canterbury to a priest that would have had the new testament gone forth in English? "What," saith he, "wouldest thou that the lay-people should wete [know] what we do?"⁶⁰

Perhaps as a result of their un-Biblical preparation, few priests were inclined to accurately preach Christ's gospel. When they did preach, Tyndale thought their sermons aided Antichrist's cause by being ineffectual or misleading. Doctrine was taught by allegory, which he considered an especially diabolical mixture of truth and fiction. In "Four Senses of the Scripture" Tyndale shows how allegory could rightly be used to clarify New Testament

ideas by referring to Old Testament events or objects:

And likewise do we borrow likenesses or allegories of the scripture, as of Pharaoh and Herod, and of the scribes and Pharisees, to express our miserable captivity and persecution under antichrist the pope. (Tyndale, p. 343)

But the priests, he says, had long ago lost the proper way of applying allegories and had turned them into a means of deception:

The greatest cause of which captivity and the decay of the faith, and this blindness wherein we now are, sprang first of allegories. For Origen [185?-254?] and the doctors of his time drew all the scripture unto allegories: whose ensample they that came after followed so long, till they at last forgot the order and process of the text, supposing that the scripture served but to feign allegories upon . . . Then came our sophisters with their anagogical and chopological sense, and with an anti-theme of half an inch, out of which some of them draw a thread of nine days long. (Tyndale, p. 343)

The word "chopological" is a variation of "choplogic," meaning "sophistical or contentious argument" (OED). The OED finds "chopological" only in Tyndale, saying he employed it in derision of "tropological," a word the Church used to signify metaphorical or figurative interpretation of Scripture.

What turned out to be Tyndale's major effort against Antichrist was the first printed English New Testament

translated from Greek and Hebrew sources rather than from the Latin Vulgate (Tyndale, p. xv). Gervaise E. Duffield reports that young Tyndale originally conceived the idea of translating the Bible into his native tongue after becoming acquainted with some local priests in the home of his employer and finding them ignorant and deceptive. He is reported to have said to them that "if God spares my life, ere many years pass, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost" (Tyndale, p. xiv). In his efforts, he met with many obstacles; the Church held that translation of the Bible was an impossible, dangerous, and unlawful task (Tyndale, p. 30). But Tyndale understood the Church's resistance as the work of Antichrist:

What is the cause that we may not have
the old Testament, with the new also,
which is the light of the old . . . ?
I can imagine no cause verily, except
it be that we should not see the work
of Antichrist and juggling of hypo-
crites.⁶¹

After his translation was printed, the Church claimed that it contained two thousand corruptions or errors. Tyndale professed willingness to rectify mistakes, desiring "them that are learned to amend if ought were found amiss" (Tyndale, p. 30). But instead of offering corrections, he says, the priests told the lay people that his Testament could not be mended. Recognizing the inspection some

clergymen had given his work, he nevertheless opined that it was more Scripture than many of them had ever read before, and he regretted that it was only to count every undotted "i" and label it heresy. He averred that the clergy preferred "a thousand books . . . to be put forth against their abominable doings and doctrine, than that the scripture should come to light" (Tyndale, p. 31). In a lengthier reply to adverse remarks, he doubted that his priestly critics knew enough Greek or Latin to make reliable judgments on his translation even though they managed to read a Latin work by Albertus (perhaps Albertus Magnus [1206?-1280], a Dominican monk who wrote extensively on theology, metaphysics, and natural science)⁶² called De Secretis Mulierum (The Secrets of Women) "in which yet, though they be never so sorrily learned, they pore day and night, and make notes therein, and all to teach the midwives, as they say" (Tyndale, p. 32). He appears unconvinced by their claim that they read to gain information for teaching midwives, who were not usually taught by theologians except perhaps for the use of certain drugs related to the practice of midwifery. He also said the priests struggled through a compilation of "Constitutions" by William Lyndwood (a renowned medieval cannonist)⁶³ just to learn what levies they might put on the people.

Tyndale viewed the Church's prohibition of Scripture reading and the promotion of secular literature as a result

of Antichrist's influence:

Finally, that this threatening and forbidding the lay people to read the scripture is not for the love of your souls (which they care for as the fox doth for the geese), is evident, and clearer than the sun; inasmuch as they permit and suffer you to read Robin Hood, and Bevis of Hampton, Hercules, Hector and Troilus, with a thousand histories and fables of love and wantonness, and of ribaldry, as filthy as heart can think, to corrupt the minds of youth withal, clean contrary to the doctrine of Christ and of his apostles.
 . . . (Tyndale, p. 331)

He derided the Church's approval of "unwritten verities" as spiritual guides:

. . . Covetousness blinded [More's] eyes
 . . . and hardened his heart against the truth, with the confidence of his painted poetry, babling eloquence, and juggling arguments of subtle sophistry, grounded on his "unwritten verities," . . . as true and as authentic as his story of Utopia. (Tyndale, p. 276)

In fact, he says, the clergy consider part of the Bible little more than fiction:

And the lives, stories, and gests of men, which are contained in the Bible, they [the clergy] read as things no more pertaining unto them than a tale of Robin Hood. (Tyndale, p. 86)

The preference of man's word over God's was evidence to Tyndale of Antichrist at work in the Catholic Church.

Seventy-five years after Tyndale died, fifty-four of King James' most noted scholars accepted large sections of his translation for the English Bible issued in 1611. The characterizations of the scholars reveal men of erudition: Lancelot Andrews, skilled in more than ten languages, was described as one "who might have been interpreter general at Babel. . . . The world wanted learning to know how learned he was"; William Bedwell was known as the "greatest living Arabic scholar"; and John Harmer was reported to be "a most noted Latinist, Grecian and divine."⁶⁴ These men drew freely on the work done by Tyndale and those who worked with him:

Eighty percent of the text of the King James Version is taken from the Tyndale Bible.⁶⁵

Almost nine-tenths of the New Testament portion of this version [KJV] can be found word for word in the Tyndale version of 1525.⁶⁶

To show the proportion of Tyndale's influence in relation to the contributions of others, Wilbur M. Smith, writing in an editorial essay in the Open Bible edition of the KJV, states:

It has been said that four percent of the vocabulary goes back to the days of Wycliffe, eighteen percent came from Tyndale, thirteen percent from Coverdale, nineteen percent from the Geneva Bible, four percent from the Bishops' Bible, and three percent from all other preceding versions. Thirty-nine percent of the vocabulary of the KJV is unique.⁶⁷

Yet an early twentieth century critic, James Gairdner, questions Tyndale's ability and the wisdom of distributing the Scriptures to the laity:

The whole English-speaking world is largely indebted to him [Tyndale] for his vigorous and lucid translation of the Scriptures, which, so far as it extended, became ultimately, with really rather few alterations, the text of the familiar Bible of King James. Tyndale indeed was, for his day, a fair scholar in Greek and Hebrew, and he applied all his learning most conscientiously to the great object he had at heart, of putting the source and fountain of all divinity within the reach even of the least educated readers, that they might form their own views of the Gospel independently of any teaching from professional theologians. That this was a really dangerous design founded on a view of Scripture which was in itself superstitious does not diminish our admiration.⁶⁸

In judging Tyndale to be a "fair" scholar and in saying that the men working on the 1611 version accepted much of his work, Gairdner implies that the King James scholars either approved inferior work or were not discriminating enough to detect it. Presumably, they would not have adopted Tyndale's efforts if they had appeared defective. Granted the limitations of Bible studies in the sixteenth century, their acceptance places Tyndale's scholarship on a level with theirs and allows for his work the same kind of recognition theirs received.

Another Gairdner objection is as specious as some that angered Tyndale. Gairdner quotes accurately from

Tyndale's "The Interpretation of Scripture,"

Thou shalt understand that the Scripture hath but one sense, which is the literal sense. And that literal sense is the root and ground of all, and the anchor that never faileth, whereunto if thou cleave, thou canst never err or go out of the way.⁶⁹

Then he analyzes the quotation as follows:

The metaphors are rather curious. Cleaving to an anchor cannot be recommended as a safe process if the ship be in any danger. Nor does an anchor direct us so as to prevent our going out of the way.⁷⁰

Gairdner makes the word "anchor" the referent for "whereunto," and since "root" and "ground" are parallel, they would also be referents, compounding the oddity of Tyndale's thought. But, Tyndale's paragraph emphasizes the "literal sense" as the means for avoiding error; if Gairdner's explanation were correct, Tyndale's words certainly would be nonsensical.

Gairdner correctly points to Tyndale's marginal notes as a source of much animosity from the Catholic Church; he declares that Tyndale took advantage of every passage from which to draw comments against the pope and the clergy.⁷¹ Beside the verse "How shall I curse whom God curseth not?" he wrote, "The Pope can tell how."⁷² Beside the verse "They blessed Rebekah" he noted, in an allusion to papal

blessings, "To bless a man's neighbor is to pray to him and to wish him good, and not to wag two fingers over him."⁷³

Beside Exodus 12.12, a verse telling how God planned to pass through Egypt to kill the first born of man and beast, he noted:

The lambe was called passeover that the very name itself should put them in remembraunce what it signified, for the signes that God ordained either signified the benefites done, or promyses to come and were not dome [dumb] as are the signes of oure domme God the Pope.⁷⁴

In the margin for Exodus 18.21 describing what kind of men Israel should choose to lead ("able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain"), he restated the Renaissance claim that the pope accepted dominion from Satan:

Oure prelates nether feare God, for they preach not truely: nor are lesse covetouse than Iudas: for they haue receaued of the devill the kyngdomes of the erth and the glorie thereof which Christ refused Mathe. 4.⁷⁵

Though some of Tyndale's notes are instructive, the ones that were derogatory drew resentment from the Church and its representatives. It is difficult to understand why he added the insulting notes when the translation itself was enough to imperil his life.

Tyndale is the only major writer in this study to lose his life to the forces against which he fought. Before his death he spoke out against methods used in trying those accused of religious offenses:

Read here with judgment, good reader, the examination of the blessed man of God [William Thorpe], and there thou shalt easily perceive wherefore our holy church (so the most unholy sort of all the people will be called) make off [oft?] their examinations in darkness, off [oft?] the lay people clean excluded from their counsels . . . of whose articles and examination there is no layman that can shew a word. Who can tell wherefore (not so many years past) there were seven burnt in Coventry in one day? Who can tell wherefore that good priest and holy martyr sir Thomas Litton was burnt, now this year, at Maidstone in Kent? I am sure, no man.⁷⁶

Tyndale himself may have experienced the injustice he alludes to; for at least nine years (1527-1536) during which his works were banned and burned, he had to produce his translations in foreign countries; in Antwerp where he became the victim of a conspiracy, he was jailed for a year and a half while he disputed on doctrinal matters with the priests at the University of Louvaine.⁷⁷ At some point in his conflict with the Church, he felt that if Antichrist were not exposed and rebuffed in England, the country was doomed to bondage under him,

. . . inasmuch as we deny Christ . . .
and will not have him reign over us; but
will be still children of antichrist, and

antichrist's possession, burning the gospel of Christ, and defending a faith that may not stand with his holy testament.⁷⁸

Foxe gives no actual offense as the basis for Tyndale's imprisonment, and perhaps because the trial took place in a foreign country the information was not available to him; but it is known that English clergy disapproved of Tyndale's work and that his sentence was passed after lengthy disputations with French clergy. It therefore seems reasonable to assume, as Foxe implies, that the sentence arose out of ecclesiastical displeasure, including that of Rome. Whatever the reason, he was condemned by the Austrian emperor, and in 1536, Tyndale was strangled and burned outside of Antwerp.

After Tyndale's death, other men continued to espouse the causes of the reformers. John Bale, whose works we consider next, was as strongly convinced as was Tyndale that the forces of Antichrist were ravaging England and should be driven out. Though his goal was similar to Tyndale's, Bale fought with different weapons.

John Bale

John Bale (1495-1563) was the harshest and most uninhibited of the writers who directed their efforts against what they considered to be Antichrist. His view of this enemy agreed with the widely held sixteenth century

opinion that the Roman Church was actually working against the teachings of Christ. Bale was concerned that England should no longer be exploited by churchmen who, he says, had been for the preceding one thousand years under Satan's leadership. The force of his conviction marks him as a major figure in the religious struggle worked out in Renaissance England.

Bale joined the numerous Renaissance authors who accepted the transfer of John's antichrist into the Revelation as "the Antichrist," where the idea was combined with or absorbed in the figure of one or both of the beasts. From there he saw Antichrist throughout the Bible, using the term to summarize all the ramifications of this idea and anything else which he considered contrary to Christ's teachings or to the true Church. Bale employed the term, not to deal with the question of Christ's divinity, the sole application in the Johannine letters, but with the question of whether the Roman Church was Christian. Bale was convinced that the Church showed few evidences of following Christ and therefore could not be the true Church.

Bale's works, whether prose or drama, emphasize his belief that the pope was Antichrist. They portray the Catholic Church riddled with gross immorality and deception, blaming the corruption on Antichrist, the name by which Bale identified the pope and his hierarchy. From Bale's viewpoint, the remnants of Catholicism in the

government were responsible for the deaths of the martyrs, some of which he apparently witnessed. His blanket statements charging the Church with harboring Antichrist accomplished two things at once: the lumping together of particular issues and the eliciting of support from Englishmen who would not be thought in league with Antichrist, no matter who he was. His propositions contain much Scripture but are flawed by some of the same leaps found in earlier treatises.

Bale says little about the apocalyptic role of the Antichrist, whom he placed for the most part in the past and in sixteenth century England. Bale, however, may have thought of his time as that directly preceding the end-times:

I doubt no within shorte space she
shal be whollye turned over into the
bottomlesse pytte againe with all her
heytnishe ceremonies, supersticions and
sorceryes, and never returne heytherward
nomore thā the greate myghte mylstone^t
is throwne into the sees bottom,^y
Christe so restored unto his ryght
spowse.⁷⁹

Like any Englishman born before the Act of Supremacy in 1534, Bale was part of a Catholic family, and at the age of twelve he entered a Carmelite monastery. Later he attended Cambridge, where he came under the influence of Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Wentworth, becoming an ardent reformer around 1530.⁸⁰ As he looked back on his early

association he evaluted it in this manner:

Yea, they have bene so dased with their dottages, and so tangled with customes, that as men losynge their wittes without all Godlye remembraunce, reason, wisdom, discredessyon, understandynge, judgement, and grace, the lawes of God layed a part, the commaundementes neglected and the scriptures despysed, they have not only kneled, crossed, kyssed, set up lyghtes, and holden up theyr handes before rotten postes, but also called their fathers in heaven. Yea (I axe God mercie a thousande tymes) I have bene one of them myself.⁸¹

Such strongly felt sentiments recur frequently throughout his literature, and I found no hint that he ever considered returning to the Roman Church. Of the change in his thinking, he relates:

[I] presently saw and acknowledged my own deformity, and immediately, through the divine goodness, I was removed from a barren mountain to the flowing and fertile valley of the gospel . . . Hence I made haste to deface the mark of wicked anti-christ, and entirely throw off his yoke from me.⁸²

Bale had been closely involved with the Roman Church for about twenty years; yet he said very little good about it after he left. A few of his specific criticisms are reflected in his costuming directions for the play, The Three Laws: Sodomy is to dress like a monk, Ambition like a bishop, Covetousness like a spiritual lawyer, False Doctrine like a popish doctor, and Hypocrisy like a grey

friar.⁸³ The names of these characters comprise a concise list of the themes found in both the plays and the prose considered in this study. Bale's early experiences did not turn him away from religion, but only from religion as he had seen it practiced.

Though he did not die because of his dissenting beliefs, Bale was forced to flee the Church's retribution at least twice, going to Germany in 1540 when Cromwell fell and embarking for Holland in 1553 when Mary took the throne. On his second flight he was taken by pirates and sold as a slave.⁸⁴ Although he eventually returned to England, his health was permanently impaired.

The Church's reluctance to teach the Scriptures as authoritative along with laws prohibiting laymen from reading Scripture in English seemed to Bale Antichrist's attempts to keep people in ignorance, putting them at the mercy of the clergy. That persons found reading English translations of the Bible could be condemned as traitors and heretics without even such refuge as was still granted to thieves and murderers⁸⁵ confirmed Bale's conviction that the Church was afraid of the very truth it claimed to teach and defend. Bale was aware of Wyclif's efforts to provide an English Bible and of repeated official attempts to destroy it; and though he was born a hundred years after Wyclif's death, he was greatly influenced by Wyclif's works. Bale, in turn, played an important part in

the preservation of Wyclif's books:

Great slaughter and burning hath been here in England for John Wycliffe's books, ever since the year of our Lord M.CCC.LXXXII. [1382]; yet have not one of them thoroughly perished. I have at this hour the titles of a hundred and forty-four of them which are many more in number: for some of them under one title comprehendeth two books, some three, some four; yea, one of them containeth twelve.⁸⁶

Bale's works frequently do not reflect the dignified, pompous clergyman that might be expected from his title: Doctor of Divinity, the Bishop of Ossory. Margins of theological discussions heavily shaded with references to authority carry also subjective and emotional comments. An edge of desperation surfaces in Select Works as he deplores the unjust treatment of the martyrs and lashes out against the doctrines of persons who sent English Christians to the burning stake. In his account of Anne Askew's trial (also described by Foxe, below, p. 115), Bale reaches a peak of unclerical exasperation. He reports that during questioning about her belief in transubstantiation, Anne was asked specifically "whether a mouse eating the host received God, or no." Bale sarcastically remarks, "Is not here (think you) well-favored and well-fashioned divinity [theology] to establish an article of the christian faith?" After emphasizing that Catholic clergymen themselves disagreed on this question over which Anne was sent

to her death, Bale bursts out, "O blasphemous beasts, and blind blundering Balaamites!"⁸⁷

In his historical essays, Bale gathered a random network of Scripture references to corroborate his arguments. Ignoring context, he selected segments of Scripture containing words or phrases that fitted in with his viewpoint and applied them to events and personages of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. He chose bits and pieces to support his constant theme that the Church of Rome was completely antithetical to anything godly. The following comparison of Scriptural with Balian contexts found in Select Works illustrates these points.

Bale uses sixteen references (not one of which comes from 1 or 2 John) to describe and identify the Antichrist and to relate him to persons and events. He selects a Scripture verse containing a particular epithet appropriate to his idea of Antichrist and then claims that the verse is actually speaking of Antichrist, when in many cases the full context of the verse deals with another subject altogether. Whether the verses refer to the beasts of Revelation, to the man of sin, to Satan, or only to some general evil, Bale links them at will to the Antichrist.

In the first of these sixteen references Bale claims that 2 Thessalonians 2 refers to Antichrist as an "adversary."⁸⁸ Characteristically, Bale neglects to mention a

specific verse; apparently here his background verses are numbers 3 and 4a:

Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it [the apocalyptic day of the Lord mentioned in verses 1 and 2] will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped. (2 Thess. 2.3,4a)

Bale is not alone in considering this passage a description of Antichrist; writers who believed that Antichrist was to be revealed during future apocalyptic events often include this text in their discussions. Bale correctly interprets "he that opposeth and exalteth himself against . . . God" as "adversary," but Antichrist is not mentioned in the verse. Rather, this adversary is the yet-to-be revealed man of sin, the son of perdition, not John's antichrist who has been in the world since the beginning of the Christian era.

Next, Bale calls the Antichrist an "unsatiable [sic] dog,"⁸⁹ adopting a phrase from the pre-Christian Hebrew prophet Isaiah who, concerned with the sins of his own nation, promised in chapter 56 God's acceptance of sincere converts to Judaism, a subject unrelated to the New Testament antichrist. In spite of this context, Bale uses the following verses to refer to Antichrist:

His watchmen are blind, they are all without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, the dogs are greedy; they can never have enough; and these are shepherds that cannot understand. (Is. 56.10, 11a)

Bale then takes two references from the Psalms to comment on Antichrist. He erroneously gives Psalm 4 to support a description of Antichrist as a "pursuing enemy" that in fact appears in Psalm 7:

If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, . . . let the enemy pursue my soul, and overtake it. (Psalm 7.4,5)

No possible connection with Antichrist can be found in this whole Psalm; the same is true of Psalm 74, to which he next refers and from which he takes the epithet "enemy to the sanctuary."⁹⁰ This Psalm appeals to God to show his power before the writer's enemies, which did not include Antichrist; yet Bale finds Antichrist in the words

Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual ruins,
all the evil that the enemy hath done in
the sanctuary. (Psalm 74.3)

The next four references are all given as support for "ravens wolf" (Matt. 7.[15], Luke 10.[3], John 10.[12], and Acts 20.[29]) and merit no criticism. Each pictures a wolf as a threat to Christ's flock, beginning with the twelve disciples as they were sent into the world, going

on to the larger circle of Christ's early followers, and then on to Paul's concern for the believers in Ephesus. The fifth New Testament reference, showing one of the apocalyptic angels pouring a vial of God's wrath on the earth, Bale gives to support his accusation that one activity of Antichrist is to "vex men with heat of the fire,"⁹¹ probably alluding to the fiery deaths of the martyrs:

And the fourth [angel] poured out his bowl [or vial] upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of the God which hath power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.
(Rev. 16.8,9)

Bale is apparently calling attention to the scorching of men with fire, reminding his readers of the martyrs' deaths at the burning stake. But the analogy to the martyrs breaks down in the second clause of sentence two: ". . . and they blasphemed the name of the God which hath power over these plagues. . . ." Both Bale and Foxe report the victorious prayers of the martyrs as their bodies shriveled in the fires. And though the angel is said to pour the bowl, Bale attributes the vexation to Antichrist.

The sixth New Testament reference is the part of 2 Thessalonians 2.4 omitted from the first discussion of this verse: ". . . so that he sitteth in the temple of

God, setting himself forth as God." Bale quotes this section thus: "'Antichrist," saith St. Paul, 'shall sit,' not without, but 'within the very temple of God.'"⁹² By substituting "Antichrist" for the pronoun "he" in the verse, Bale again makes the name "Antichrist" an appositive for "the man of sin" and "the son of perdition."

Next follow three Old Testament references and three from the New Testament. First, Bale attempts to make a point about imprisonment for religious offenses and claims that Antichrist tried to "hold men in prison."⁹³ He again sees Antichrist in Isaiah:

Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and overthrew the cities thereof; that let not loose his prisoners to their home? (Is. 14.16b,17)

Without doubt, this verse was for Bale more of a report on current events regarding prisoners about whom he was concerned than a prophecy of future events.

Next follow words from Isaiah frequently given as a quotation from Lucifer shortly before his fall out of Heaven:

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most high.
(Is. 14.14)

Bale unhesitatingly assigns these sentiments to Antichrist,⁹⁴

disregarding the time between Satan's fall before man was created and the events of Revelation. Ideas usually connected with Lucifer, or Satan, are mixed with those referring to the most outstanding personage of end times--one of the beasts pictured in Revelation. The emphasis remains on a conspicuous figure of great power of a kind totally absent from John's epistles. Having accumulated an impressive list of negative characteristics and overlooking other prophecies connected to apocalyptic happenings, Bale applies all his selections to the pope. He uses these verses to express his hope for England's imminent release from the influence of Antichrist figures, whether that influence comes from the pope himself or from English clerics still operating under remnants of papal domination. At the downfall of this enemy, Bale implies that the people will victoriously shout the words of Isaiah 14.17 (above, p. 75) in derision and triumph over the fallen Antichrist.

Citing next Ezekiel 34,⁹⁵ Bale comments that Antichrist "churlishly check[s] and rule[s] in cruelty." The closest the KJV comes to this terminology is in verses 3 and 4:

Ye [the shepherds of Israel, v. 2] eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool . . . The diseased have ye not strengthened. . . . neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with rigour have ye ruled over them. (Ezek. 34.3,4)

These shepherds, who are doing their job badly, seem analogous to Bale's view of the pope as a political and religious leader, but the passage furnishes no proof of the pope's wrongdoing nor support for the argument that the pope is Antichrist; and there is certainly no resemblance to John's antichrist. Bale could have used the words just cited for his next accusation--that Antichrist "eat[s] the flesh of the fattest." But he chooses to add another reference, perhaps for increased weight of evidence--Zechariah 11.[16b]: "He [again, the shepherd] shall eat the flesh of the fat. . . ." ⁹⁶ These fragmented references from the Old Testament contribute no more certainty to Antichrist's identification than random phrases chosen from any writing; their only authority lies in their Biblical source.

Drawing next from the New Testament, Bale finds that Antichrist is "drunk with blood" ⁹⁷ (Rev. 17.[6]). The actual verse says, "And I saw the woman [Babylon, v. 5] drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." This reference moves from the beast to yet another character in Revelation--the Whore of Babylon, who is an entity quite apart from the beasts. The two remaining references ⁹⁸ support Bale's statement that Antichrist will perform "false miracles and exalt himself above God":

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shew great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. (Matt. 24.24)

And he [the second beast] doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. (Rev. 13.13)

The first reference could apply to someone who worked against Christ or who claimed to function in his place, as the root meaning of the word "Antichrist" would allow, but the second reference has no connection with John's antichrist or, indeed, with any of the popes.

Bale's starting point in these writings seems to be the belief that the church was riddled with Antichrists; second, using his own definition of the word, he labels specific people as Antichrists; third, he finds verses that mention their particular misdeeds; and last, linking appropriate verses to the specified Antichrists, he presents the selected individuals to his reader as proven Antichrists. Bale was doubtless speaking against real evil in the Church, but his method of argument is open to question. He was not using Scripture to teach truth as he said preachers should; instead, he was molding it to prove his own propositions and accusations.

In another attempt to move his readers away from the influence of the Church, Bale wrote an exposition of the book of Revelation, The Image of Both Churches. Though the

theme is again the pope and the Church as Antichrist and though his forceful, somewhat bellicose, personality does not hide itself completely under a scholarly clerical manner, he adjusts his method to his material. Commenting at length on each verse of this favorite source of inspiration for apocalyptic authors, he takes frequent opportunity to reiterate his theme. His discussion of chapter 13 will show how he approaches this task and how he emphasizes his theme.

Before he takes up the chapter itself, Bale writes a short introduction:

By the monstruouse, ougelye, and most
odiousse beast rysyng out of the sea, with
vii heades and x hornes is mente the
universall or whole Antichriste compre-
hendinge in him all the wickednesse, furye,
falshede, frowardnesse, deceyt, lyes,
craftes, slaughtes, subtilities, hipoc-
resye, tyrannye, mischieffes, pride, and
all other devilyshenesse, of all his
maliciouse members which hath bene sens
the begynninge. The exceedinge pre-
sumpcyon of them that hateth the,
blessed Lorde (sayth David) ariseth daye
by daye. Contynuallye thine enemies
growe, alwayes they increace, and ever-
more they prospere in this worlde. Not
from the stedfaste or sure grounde (which
are the Lordes people) aryseth this
beast, but out of the waveringe sea, or
from the fyckle felyshyppe and moveable
multitude of the ungodlye. For the
wycked sort after Esaye are the ragynge
sea that can not rest, whose water fometh
with the mire and gravel. No peace is
amonge the ungodly (sayth the Lord) no
unite, no charyti, nor mutuall Christen
love. It pleased therefore the holie

ghost to provoke Johan after his secrete
vysion, to discribe this mighty antichriste
thus in his right colors, accordinge to
that he had seane, to the fore warninge
of Christes people.⁹⁹

Bale's highly figurative language grows out of his familiarity with Scripture, forming a background for the awesome power of his Antichrist. The picture he projects includes a wavering sea of people from which arises a creature worthy of superlatives. Bale's conception is so grand that at times he surpasses John's original. Bale draws on David and Isaiah again, although they remain secondary in importance here.

Following the introduction, Bale quotes the first two verses of chapter 13, dividing them into eleven phrases. A typical example of his phrasing follows:

[Phrase] 1 And I sawe a beast ryse out
of the sea, [phrase] 2 having seven heads
and ten hornes, [phrase] 3 and upon his
hornes ten crownes. . . .¹⁰⁰

After each verse division follow lengthy comments; the discussion of phrase 3 will illustrate the practice:

3 This beast had upon his x hornes
.x. crounes, sygnifyenge his victorie,
dominion, and primacie over the unyversall
worlde, and that he through the wicked-
nesse of the people, is the unworthy
captayne and prince therof. In this
onlye poynt dyffereth the Dragon from
the beast, the devyll from his members,
or sathan from his carnall synagoge.
He had vii crounes upon his vii heades.

They have .x. crounes here upon theyr
 .x. hornes. For that he hath but in
 symple suggestion, they have in double
 powre of coaccion. Wher as he doth but
 dallyenglye perswade, they maye enforce
 and compel. Where as he doth but easely
 move, they maye by rigorouse auctorite
 constraine. Whan he hath propouned an
 erreure, they maye by their powre
 establishe it for an infallyble truthe,
 and make of it a necessary article of
 the christen beleve, as they have done
 of purgatory, pardons, confessyon, saintes
 worshippinge, latten service hearinge,
 and such like. Whan he hath once made a
 lye (as he is the father of all lyes)
 they maye auctorisie it for an unwritten
 veryte, lyke as they have done manye.
 Much more mischefe may they do, beinge
 his spirituall instruments than he can
 do alone, as largely apereth by their
 workes. Never coude sathan have put
 Christe unto death, had he not entred
 into Judas and so betrayed him, had he
 not entred into the bysshopes and lawers
 and so condemned him. Never had the
 Apostles, nor all other godly preachers
 sens their tyme, bene sent out of the
 waye, had not those mytred Mahometes and
 priestes wrought stil their old feares.¹⁰¹

"He" includes the Dragon, the devil, and Satan, all three really one entity, an evil trinity. "They" includes the beast (already identified in the introduction as the Antichrist), the devil's members, and Satan's carnal synagogue. Bale explains that Satan plans wickedness, and Antichrist in the Catholic Church puts it into doctrinal and legal form. He sketches the cooperation of "he" and "they" from Christ's betrayal until the persecution of his own day. As in this example, Bale's ability to produce numerous thoughts out of a short phrase while skillfully

aiming darts at his current adversaries continues for the whole of his exposition. When he finishes his discussion of 404 verses, Bale's book is 438 pages long--a tribute to his expansive style and creative mind.

The first part of Bale's Image contains numerous marginal notes from the Scriptures and from religious works of ancient and contemporary writers. He lists eighty-two writings on the book of Revelation which he says he consulted--ones as ancient as Justinus (154 A.D.) and as contemporary as John Calvin (1509-1564) and Luther (1483-1546). Most of the writers were monks or Catholic clergy at some time or other, and Bale claims he used them only as they agreed with the Scriptures, but his main criterion seems to be that they agreed with him. He does not analyze or discuss their writings; rather he selects from them sections which support his arguments against the Roman Church. Since most of the works of the eighty-two authors are not readily available, his accuracy in their use cannot be judged directly. But if he used them in the same manner in which he used those of Biblical writers whose works are available, it seems probable that some titles are mentioned only for effect or for some very obscure reason. Some materials may be taken out of context, as are some of the Scriptural references. At least one contemporary questioned the suitability of several references in Image, as Bale himself tells us. In the preface to the second

part of Image, he discusses a criticism by someone he calls "Momus" aimed at his use of 1 Corinthians 6 in a marginal reference at the beginning of the first part:

Satan upon the pynacle of the temple
 never bestowed his alleged scripture more
 perverselye, than this Momus interpreted
 certein of my allegacions, nor yet farther
 from their right understanding: But I
 forgeve it hym with thys fore warnynge
 for this tyme, though it be not the fyrst
 lewde point that he hath plaied, in that
 case he so leave his quarelling. My
 seconde allegacyon upon the preface .l.
 Cori. vi. is not sett there to aucthori-
 tise the Apocalyps, as he most falsely
 and all contrarye to my meaning hath in-
 terpreted it, but affyrmeth that the
 Christen belevers are Christes members,
 whiche ought of necessyte by the holye
 ghostes appointment to hear and to reade
 the wordes of the sayd boke. For I knowe
 that the Epistle unto the Corinthianes
 was written of Paul x years at the least
 before Saint Johans Apocalips. No lesse
 is he than a false prophete that resysteth
 Jeremye rebuking Babylon for her wycked-
 nesse.¹⁰²

This last sentence evidently acknowledges an additional criticism from Momus on Bale's use of Jeremiah 50.8, which warns people to flee from Babylon and other wicked places. Since Bale consistently uses Babylon to refer to the powers of darkness, Momus' objection seems in this instance groundless.

The other enemy is the printer who incorrectly set down some of the marginal notes in spite of the efforts of two proof readers supplied by Bale to insure accuracy.

What obligated him and his helpers to print their own condemnation is difficult to imagine:

But ii cruell enemies have my just labours had in that behalfe, of whom the one have them falsyfyed, the other blasphemed. Which hath caused me to leave them out in al that here foloweth. The printers are the fyrst, whose heady hast, negligence, and covetuousnesse commonly corrupteth all bokes. These have both displaced them and also chaunged their nombers to the truthes derogacion, what though they had at their handes ii learned correctours which toke all paynes possyble to preserve them.¹⁰³

Bale actually did leave out most of the marginal references in the second part of Image, presumably because he was displeased with his printers. And thus we have lost an additional template of the writer's thinking processes.

Bale did not restrict himself to exposition. Following the same theme as in the prose, he wrote several plays using dramatic exaggeration to express additional dimensions in his idea of the pope as Antichrist. Reading Bale's accounts of the martyrs or his exposition on Revelation does not prepare one for his plays. Though in the prose the evils of the clergy are balanced by the saintliness of the martyrs or the inescapable justice of God, in the plays positive qualities appear in very few characters. Many writers are satisfied with one villain per play; Bale made up his casts predominantly of villains.

In his plays Bale adds his touch to two recurring accusations which are almost routine in anti-Roman literature--that priests and nuns engaged in various sexual sins and that the pope obtained his world power from Satan. Bale's best known work, King John, deals with both of these as his characters develop Bale's larger theme that the pope is Antichrist. But the accusations are presented in a more concentrated form in two other plays by Bale, and a look at these before going on to King John will enhance our understanding of these two allegations. The first accusation--sexual sins among priests and nuns--surfaces often enough in the writings of the time to warrant a degree of belief, although how much is difficult to say. Wyclif, a man of much more moderate language, had deplored sexual activities among the fourteenth century clergy (above, p. 27). Since, however, Bale exaggerates so many other ideas, it would be safe to assume that he also amplifies the prevalence of the sexual misdeeds to which he refers. The repetition in Renaissance writing of the second accusation--the pope's acceptance of world dominion from Satan--constitutes an important contribution to the idea of the pope as Antichrist.

In a dialogue between two allegorical characters in The Three Laws, Infidelity requests that Sodomy describe his perversion of the law of Nature put in man by God to guide him in sexual practices:

Sodomy: I dwelt among the Sodomites,
 The Benjamites, and Midianites,
 And now the popish hypocrites
 Embrace me everywhere.
 I am now become all spiritual,
 For the clergy at Rome, and over all,
 For want of wives to me doth fall--
 To God they have no fear . . .
 . . . If monkish sects renew,
 And popish priests continue,
 Which are of my retinue,
 To live I shall be sure.
 Clean marriage they forbid,
 Yet cannot their ways be hid;
 Men know what hath betid
 When they have been in parel.
 *Oft have they buried quick
 *Such as were never sick,
 Full many a proper trick
 They have to help their quarrel.
 In Rome to me they fall,
 Both bishop and cardinal,
 Monk, friar, priests, and all;
 More rank they are than ants . . . 104

The two starred (*) lines refer to some kind of violence leading to death in the exercise of sodomy. A few pages later Natural Law and Infidelity discuss claims that some of the clergy indulged in heterosexual activities (p. 26) which sometimes required further sins to cover up the initial ones. Natural Law mentions nuns who kill their unwanted babies and bury them in "privies" (p. 27). The murder is not censured any more than the fornication and the sodomy; Natural Law declares that were priests allowed to marry, all such sins would be eliminated from among them.

The second recurring accusation regards Satan's bestowal on the pope of the worldly power refused by Jesus during his temptation. In The Temptation of Our Lord,

Satan peevishly reacts to Jesus' refusal:

Satan (to Jesus):
 Thy vicar at Rome I think will be my
 friend . . .
 He shall me worship, and have the world
 to reward;
 That thou here foresakest he will most
 highly regard.¹⁰⁵

Though they believed in an all-powerful God, medieval and Renaissance reformers frequently repeated this explanation as to why the powers of evil were temporarily victorious over Christ's true followers.

Bale's major drama and the work for which he is best known is King John.¹⁰⁶ A combination of the morality and the historical play, it deals with religious matters and allegorical characters as well as political events and historical personages. The specific objective is to expose the Roman Church as the tool of Antichrist and as a threat to the existence of civil government, using the fall of King John as a dramatic example. Along with this, Bale carries the familiar thread of discrepancies between the Bible and Catholic dogma. We do not know how accurately Bale recounts his own experience with the Church in his plays; we know that the overall historical basis is weak in places, although some events and characters can be located in written accounts. Whatever the authenticity of the plays, the opinions and attitudes presented are strongly consistent and fit in with the remainder of Bale's writings.

The characters in King John belong to one of three groups, the first headed by the king, the second consisting of the pope and his hierarchy, and the third composed of the people of England--noble and common. The first and second groups represent opposing characteristics and objectives; the third group is the rope in the tug-of-war between the first two groups. The play pleads with clergy and nobility to realize that they are unwitting papal agents in England and that as such they often exploit the common people. If the clergy and the nobility would assume their rightful relationship to their monarch, the play implies, many of England's social, economic, political, and religious problems would disappear.

To the second group Bale gives only negative characteristics and qualities. Out of the nineteen characters in the play, eleven belong to this group and all are members of the Catholic hierarchy; even the allegorical characters are eventually revealed to be synonymous with a human member of the Church and are so noted in the list of characters at the beginning of the play.

The main member of the third group is England, who portrays the downtrodden English people, impoverished by the greed of the Church. Bale seems not at all concerned with the class system as a cause for the poverty in the land, even though he does picture the noble members of the third group at odds with England through most of the play.

King John depicts the Roman Church carrying out Anti-christ's determination to suppress vernacular Scripture, thereby fostering spiritual ignorance. The king claims that even the clergy were ignorant of what the Bible taught and often did not own a copy to use in teaching the people (King John, p. 287). In place of Gospel, the king accuses, the people were given man-made doctrines:

K. John: . . . It was never well since the
clergy wrought by practise,
And left the scripture for men's
imaginations. (King John, p.
188)

In addition, the play criticizes the anti-Christian substitution of man's laws for those given by God in the Scriptures. The clerical characters support the pope's manipulation of the gospel, while King John deplores the subversion and suppression of true religion:

Sedition: . . . He [Nobility] believeth
nothing but as Holy Church
doth tell.
K. John: Why, giveth he no credence to
Christ's holy gospel?
Sedition: No, sir, by the mass! but he
calleth them heretics
That preach the gospel, and sedi-
tious schismatics;
He'tach them, vex them, from
prison to prison he turn them;
He inditeth them, judge them; and,
in conclusion, he burn them.
(King John, pp. 185-186)

K. John: . . . In her [England], more and
more, God's holy word decays
. . . (King John, p. 192)

Clergy: Of our Holy Father, in this I
 take my ground,
 Which hath authority the Scrip-
 tures to expound.
 K. John: Nay, he presumeth the Scriptures
 to confound. (King John, p.
 194)

Dissimulation:

. . . His [the pope's] intent shall
 be for to supress the Gospel.
 Yet will he glose it with a very
 good pretense--
 To subdue the Turks by a Christian
 violence.
 The Pope's power shall be above the
 powers all,
 And ear-confession a matter necessary;
 Ceremonies will be the rites ecclesi-
 astical.
 He shall set up there both pardons
 and purgatory.
 The Gospel preaching will be an
 heresy. (King John, pp. 219-220)

K. John (to Private Wealth or Cardinal Pandulphys):
 Your curses we have that we never yet
 demanded,
 But we cannot have that [what] God
 hath you commanded,
 . . . the preaching of the Gospel.
 (King John, p. 236)

The play also condemns the practice, derived from
 Antichrist and sanctioned by the Church, of granting indul-
 gences for sins not yet committed. The phrase "a poena
 et culpa" applied specifically to Plenary Indulgences from
 the thirteenth century to the Reformation:¹⁰⁷

The laity cared little about the analysis
 of it [the phrase], but they knew that the
a culpa et poena was the name for the
 biggest thing in the nature of an Indul-
 gence which it was possible to get.¹⁰⁸

In King John, Sedition grants such an indulgence to Clergy in a farcical scene that furnishes one of the few attempts at humor in the play:

Sedition (to Clergy):

Sit down on your knees, and ye shall .
have absolution

A pena et culpa, with a thousand days
of pardon.

Here is first a bone of the blessed
Trinity,

A dram of the turd of sweet Saint
Barnaby.

Here is a feather of good Saint Michael's
wing,

A tooth of Saint Twyde, a piece of David's
harp string,

The good blood of Hales, and our blessed
Lady's milk;

A louse of Saint Francis in this same
crimson silk.

A scab of Saint Job, a nail of Adam's toe,
A maggot of Moses, with a fart of Saint
Fandigo.

Here is a fig-leaf and a grape of Noe's
vineyard,

A bead of Saint Blythe, with the bracelet
of a bearward.

The devil that was hatched in Master John
Shorn's boot,

That the three of Jesse did pluck up by
the root.

Here is the latchet of sweet Saint Thomas'
shoe,

A rib of Saint Rabart, with the nuckle
bone of a Jew'

Here is a joint of Darvel Gathiron,
Besides other bones and relics many one.

In Nomine Domini Pape, amen!

(King John, p. 229)

Each of the items is in some way ridiculous, either because of an impossible time element, or an inconsistency between what is spiritual and what is real, or between who is

spiritually significant and who is not. The second Latin phrase, "In Nomine Domini Pape," translated by John Farmer as "In the name of our Lord, the Pope,"¹⁰⁹ is blasphemous; yet Bale puts the words in the mouth of Sedition, later revealed as a clergyman. Following this ceremony, Sedition declares to Clergy, "Ye are now as clean as that day ye were born" (King John, p. 229), promising he would remain so in the eyes of the Church for two years and nine months, no matter what he would do in that interval.

The inaccuracy of the Latin phrases provided additional material for dramatic attack on Church practices. Sedition is either a careless or ignorant clergyman, for neither phrase is stated correctly. "A pena et culpa" should be "a poena et culpa," the words which mean "from penalty and fault or responsibility." Perhaps "pena" is merely a spelling error, although in Renaissance works Latin and Latinate words are spelled more regularly than many common English words. Perhaps he is making a bawdy pun, a possibility entirely congruent with his character. The word "Pape" is not usually included in the second phrase and would be completely unacceptable.

The play supports Bale's contention that the pope's activities in England advanced the cause of Antichrist as they conflicted with English national interest. Bale paints vivid pictures of papal interference in English affairs, showing the pope undermining the king's sovereignty

as well as that of England in the community of nations:

K. John: . . . No prince can have his
people's obedience
Except it doth stand with the
Pope's pre-eminence. (King
John, pp. 182-183)

K. John (to Clergy):

When kings correct you for your
acts, most ungodly,
To the Pope, sitting in the chair
of pestilence,
Ye run to remain in your con-
cupiscence.
Thus set ye at nought all princely
pre-eminence. (King John, p. 189)

Sedition (to K. John):

In abbeys they [bishops] have so
many subtle spies,
For once in the year they have
secret visitations,
And if any prince reform their
ungodly fashions,
Then two of the monks must forth
to Rome, by and by,
With secret letters to avenge
their injury. (King John, p. 184)

Basing his arguments on what the Bible says about God as the source of kingly power, King John reiterates that the Pope had no right to assume civil authority: "The King is of God's appointment" (p. 177); "you have your governancy by God's gift" (p. 178); "God hath ordinaed me [the king]" (p. 180); "Our power is of God" (p. 183); "a charge from God Almighty" (p. 191); "The Scriptures charge us to obey the king" (p. 196); "Christ paid tribute to Cesar" (p. 200); "appointed of God" (p. 223); "King's power is of God"

p. 227); and "God constituted kings" (p. 321). Similar phrases are found throughout the Bible: "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice" (Prov. 8.15); "The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. 4.25b); Jesus saying, "Render . . . unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's" (Luke 20.15), and "Thou [Pilate] couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above" (John 19.11a); the discussion of authority by Paul in Romans 13.1-7 and by Peter in 1 Peter 2.13-17 in which they state that it is God's will that the king should be honored and that the ruler's power is from God. Emphasis such as Bale's on the source of kingly power is evaluated in John Neville Figgis' twentieth century comment about the medieval development of the idea of the divine right of kings:

The fact, that Imperialist writers in the middle ages, endeavouring to refute the claims of the Papacy, develop for themselves the essential notion of sovereignty, points . . . to the conflict with Rome as the true source of the theory of Divine Right.¹¹⁰

In addition to claiming that the Roman Church deposed uncooperative kings, the play decries all the money sent out of England in a one-way flow to Antichrist's foreign headquarters:

Sedition: . . . Draw to you still; but let
none from you carry! (King
John, p. 214)

K. John: While you [Clergy], for lucre, set
forth your popish laws
Yourselves to advance, ye would make
us pick straws.
. . . I wonder that you [Nobility],
for such vain popish baggage,
Could suffer England to be impover-
ished,
And made a beggar . . .
For doubtless ye do not as becometh
Nobility.
Ye spare neither lands nor goods,
but all ye give
To these cormorants. . . .
(King John, p. 194)

Considering the traditional English devotion to the monarchy
and to the rewards of labor, these were powerful arguments
against the papacy.

In King John, sexual matter is less explicit than in
The Three Laws, although much vulgar, un-Christian conver-
sation ensues. The characters refer in plain language to
excretal anatomy or functions:

Sedition: I am Sedition, that with the Pope
will hold
So long as I have a hole within
my breach. (King John, p. 177)

Sedition to King John:

. . . ye are a man so full of mercy,
Namely to women that weep with a
heavy heart
When they in the church hath let but
a little fart. (King John, p. 180)

Sedition to Usurpsed Power and others helping
to carry him:

I will beshite you all if ye set me
not down soft. (King John, p. 210)

Sedition: I would thou hadst kissed his [the
Pope's] arse, for that is holy.

Private Wealth:

How dost thou prove [to] me that
his arse is holy now?

Sedition: For it hath an hole, even fit for
the nose of you! (King John,
p. 214)

In King John, Usurpsed Power turns out to be the pope, and
Bale specifically attempts to present him as a sin-prone
individual in spite of his supposed spiritual elevation:

Sedition: What, Usurpsed Power? Cock's soul!
ye are our Pope?
Where is your three crowns, your
cross keys, and your cope?
What meaneth this matter? methink
ye walk astray.

Usurped Power:

Thou knowest I must have some dalli-
ance and play;
For I am a man, like as another is;
Sometime I must hunt, sometimes I
must Alison kiss. (King John,
p. 211)

The pope excuses his lapse from ecclesiastical duties by
pleading his common humanity; he, like other men, needs
the relaxing pleasures of hunting and the company of women
as relief from the burdens of office.

All such matter in the plays is united by the relation-
ship of Antichrist and the pope, whom Bale joins so closely
to each other and to other apocalyptic characters that at

times their identities merge:

K. John: By the boar of Rome, I trow, thou
meanest the Pope?

England: I mean none other but him; God give
him a rope! (King John, p. 176)

K. John: I rue it in heart that you, Nobility,
Should thus bind yourself to the
great captivity of bloody Babylon,
the ground and mother of whoredom--
The Romish Church I mean--more vile
than ever was Sodom. (King John,
p. 190)

Sedition: . . . And his beginner Antichrist,
The great Pope of Rome . . .
(King John, p. 204)

Though Bale generally connects any and all popes directly with Antichrist, on a few occasions he mentions specific popes. The only one named in King John is Innocent II, who was actually in office during the reign of the historical King John (1199-1216). In other plays, he makes derogatory references to Popes Julius II and Clement VII, both living during Bale's lifetime. Though most of what he says about the popes can be found in works of other authors, the references to the pope as Antichrist in this dramatic writing shows a concentrated, unwavering opposition to the papacy. His is no casual or objective interchange of theological pros and cons, but a vitriolic denouncement of the office and its occupants, as well as their underlings. Bale writes:

K. John: Avaunt, peevish priest! what, dost
 thou threaten me?
 I defy the worst both of thy Pope
 and thee! . . .
 I cannot perceive but ye are become
 Bel's [Baal's] priests,
 Living by idols: yea, the very
 Antichrists! (King John, pp. 234-235)

A second and last attempt at humor (less successful than the first) occurs near the end. During one of Sediton's absences, Clergy and Nobility promise Imperial Majesty to rid England of those characters detrimental to her welfare, and on his return to the now disapproving company, Sediton tries to ingratiate himself again with this silly song:

Peep! I see Ye!
 I am glad I have spied ye! (King John, p. 283)

After all the dignified posturing and righteous indignation which precede it, the ditty yields sudden, if brief, comic relief. This rare light moment is little more than a degrading inanity at the expense of the now disgraced Sediton.

The range and variety of his works enabled Bale to reach a wide audience with his message about Antichrist. He is one of the few Renaissance writers who wrote at length in both secular and sacred modes, which in mid-sixteenth century were widely separated. After *Everyman*, the last great religious play of the Middle Ages, the

secularization of the drama increasingly alienated the Church, and for one to be active in both literary modes required great diversity of interests. His works exhibit a catalogue of skills, all of which were used to reach different levels of society with his constantly recurring theme.

The plays appealed to those who wished to be entertained, probably including many commoners who could not or would not examine an intellectual approach to the question of Antichrist. On the other hand, Image, with its detailed references, its intricate reasoning, its numerous allusions to sacred writings and other parts of the Bible, and its sheer length, was attractive only to the highly educated reader. The persuasiveness of the works would have depended largely on whether the reader's prejudices and assumptions were similar to Bale's; but even the reader who disagreed somewhat would have been challenged to take a definite position on questions surrounding Antichrist.

Bale's allegorical characters serve several kinds of dramatic interest. Being timeless, they can apply to any age. But being translated into historical characters, they allow for a sense of discovery as Usurped Power proves to be the pope, Sedition becomes Stephen Langton, and Private Wealth changes into Cardinal Pandulphys. In their historical forms, they provide concreteness, something an

allegory does not do. The abstract character "Prologue" who speaks directly to the audience, stands a very small distance from the author in his opinions and expressions but manages to occupy a fairly noncontroversial position between audience and author as an acceptable persona.

In Image the persona disappears altogether, the writing becomes purely subjective, and the marginal comments reach directly to the reader from Bale.

Even though Bale used different forms to promote his cause, they all communicate on the emotional level. The dramas, as might be expected, concentrate on emotional rather than intellectual issues. In King John the characters representing the pope and his clergy show such undesirable personal qualities that they generate an active antipathy; King John as the embattled monarch draws sympathy as he steadily loses to supernaturally aided evil men; and England--with whom most of the audience could identify--pathetically appeals for redress from clerical mistreatment and is never quite satisfied. The eloquence of England's appeal and the ineffectual response could only have heightened the emotional state of those who felt the same grievances as did the character England. In addition, the frequent reference to Antichrist functioned as a goad. Contemporary audiences, it is reasonable to assume, would have been on the side of those characters opposing the Antichrists in the plays and would have

responded emotionally to the term and to the opinions Bale advanced.

In Bale's accounts of the martyrs the approach is understandably emotional. But one might expect that in his expository Image the emphasis would be on an intellectual consideration of his propositions. Yet here in spite of all the erudition, Bale's native vitriol surfaces, and his pronouncements seem almost as subjective as those in the plays. His work, however, combined with that of other reformers had its effect. Before men like Bale began to object, Rome controlled civil governments by an assumed theological mandate. When the dissenters challenged this claim, Rome's civil precedence came into question, and men reasoned that, just as God gave some men spiritual authority, he might give others civil authority, creating two domains instead of one. Bale, along with those who went before him and those who came after, contributed greatly to this separation of powers, employing as one of his weapons the term "Antichrist."

John Foxe

The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe (1563) presents an account of Christianity besieged by various enemies from 64 A.D. to about 1550. Its twelve books are arranged generally in chronological order with more space given to

events closer in time to the author: the first four books cover thirteen centuries, the fifth book deals with the fourteenth century when Wyclif's influence prevailed, and the last eight books look in depth at the remaining 150 years. When the history reaches the controversies surrounding Wyclif, the adversary is identified as the Church of Rome and remains so to the end of the work.

Addressing himself to Catholic sympathizers, John Foxe (1517-1587) poses "Four Questions" about the cruelty and intolerance of the Church and about its interpretation of the Scriptures:

1. How the church of Rome can be answerable to this hill of Sion, seeing in the said church of Rome is, and hath been, now so many years, such killing and slaying, such cruelty and tyranny shewed, such burning and spilling of christian blood; such malice and mischief wrought, as, in reading these histories, may to all the world appear . . .
2. My second question is this, To demand of you, catholic professors of the pope's sect, who so deadly malign and persecute the protestants professing the gospel of Christ; what just or reasonable cause have you to allege for this your extreme hatred ye bear unto them, that neither you yourselves can abide to live with them, nor yet will suffer the others to live amongst you? . . .
3. Writing, therefore, to the papists, as men expert in histories, my question is this: That seeing the prophecy of these two beasts [Rev. 13] must needs prefigure some people or dominion in

this world of some high estate or power, they will now declare unto us, what people or domination this should be; which, if they will do plainly and truly, according to the marks and properties of the said two beasts here set forth, they must needs be driven, of force inevitable, to grant and confess the same to agree only to the city and empire of Rome, and to no other. . . .

4. I turn my question to ask this of you: Whether the religion of Christ be mere spiritual, or else corporal?¹¹¹

The "hill of Sion" in Foxe's first question refers to a previous paragraph where the hill is defined as "an undoubted type of the spiritual church of Christ"¹¹² or to the part of the Church which Rome was persecuting. In the same section Foxe comprehends the pope's animosity toward Jews or Turks, but not against fellow Christians. In what sounds like a genuine offer, he proposes to engage in discussion with the Catholics as men of intelligence, although from their viewpoint his assumptions and terminology about the beasts in Revelation as symbols for themselves must have been unacceptable. Following the third question, Foxe explains the occurrence of two beasts in Revelation 13, a puzzle many authors ignored or avoided. Using history as he understood it, he identifies the first beast with the earlier political empire ruled by Rome and the second with the later religious empire controlled by Roman bishops and popes. At the conclusion of his questioning Foxe declares

. . . that the bishop of Rome, by this description, must be that second beast prophesied to come in the latter time of the church . . . to disturb the whole church of Christ, as this day too truly is come to pass. . . .¹¹³

Foxe is one of the few writers in this study who does not take every opportunity to taunt the Catholics with the title of "Antichrist," but he leaves no doubt that he believes the pope to be that one by claiming that "Antichrist reign[ed] in the church of God by violence and tyranny" through the popes from Gregory VII (1073-1086) to those ruling in the time of Wyclif. From that time on, the term "papist" is synonymous for Foxe with "follower of Antichrist." Persecution of Christ's true believers became Antichrist's most obvious manifestation. After fourteen hundred, Foxe says, Antichrist was gradually revealed in the Roman Church, and his malice was slowly transferred to the true Church even though the deaths of the martyrs convinced observers to reject the Church controlled by Antichrist.¹¹⁴ Each account of martyrdom in Acts and Monuments reveals the contrast between the cruelty of the executioners and the joyful and ungrudging deaths of the martyrs. Foxe does not always verbalize the abiding conflict between Antichrist and members of the true Church, but when he does, his statement is very clear. Two examples follow, though many more could be given. These statements were made just prior to the executions of the speakers--the first

by James Bainham, who died in 1532, and the second by Archbishop Cranmer, who died in 1556:

. . . These be the articles that I die for
. . . First, I say it is lawful for every
man and woman to have God's book in their
mother tongue. The second, that the bishop
of Rome is Antichrist. . . .¹¹⁵

And as for the pope, I refuse him, as
Christ's enemy, and Antichrist, with all
his false doctrine.¹¹⁶

Foxe shows from their own writings how the popes placed themselves above all other men in his essay "The Image of Antichrist exalting himself in the Temple of God, above all that is named God":

Forasmuch as it standeth upon necessity
of salvation for every human creature to
be subject unto me the pope of Rome, it
shall be therefore requisite and necessary
for all men that will be saved, to learn
and know the dignity of my see and excel-
lency of my domination, as is here set
forth according to the truth and very words
of mine own laws, in style as followeth:
First, my institution began in the Old
Testament, and was consummated and fin-
ished in the New, in that my priesthood
was prefigured by Aaron; and other bishops
under me were prefigured by the sons of
Aaron, that were under him; neither is it
to be thought that my church of Rome hath
been preferred by any general council, but
obtained the primacy only by the voice of
the Gospel, and the mouth of the Savior.
. . .

For as I said, look what difference there
is betwixt the sun and the moon, so great
is the power of the pope ruling over the
day, that is, over the spirituality, above
emperors and kings, ruling over the night;

that is, over the laity. Now seeing then the earth is seven times bigger than the moon, and the sun eight times greater than the earth; it followeth that the pope's dignity fifty-six times doth surmount the estate of the emperors. . . .

Thus you see all must be judged by me, and I of no man. Yea, and though I, pope of Rome, by my negligence or evil demeanour, be found unprofitable or hurtful, either to myself or others; yea, if I should draw with me innumerable souls by heaps to hell, yet may no mortal man be so hardy, so bold, or so presumptuous, to reprove me, or to say to me, "Domine cur ita facis"; that is, "Sir, why do you so?"¹¹⁷

Based on papal claims such as these, Foxe calls the pope's usurpation of Christ's office and the assumption of spiritual power the marks of Antichrist. He speaks against the pope as against Antichrist; he speaks against papists as against Antichrist's family. The whole of his work is the account of how Antichrist flourished and then was "ruined," or "at least, universally . . . detected."¹¹⁸

In general, Foxe perceived Antichrist's influence wherever true believers were persecuted:

. . . Now let us enter (Christ willing) upon the declaration of these latter times which followed after the letting out of Satan into the world; describing the wondrous perturbations and cruel tyranny stirred up by him against Christ's church, and also the valiant resistance of the church of Christ against him and Antichrist . . . Secondly, to declare the decay and ruin of the said Antichrist . . .¹¹⁹

Acts and Monuments differs from other works in this study in its length, scope, and content. Foxe gives some idea of all three on the title page:

Actes and Monuments
of these latter and perilous dayes,
touching matters of the Church
wherein are comprehended and described
the great persecutions & horrible troubles,
that have bene wrought and practised by
the Romishe Prelates, speciallye in this
Realme of England and Scotlande,
from the yeare of our Lorde a
thousande, unto the tyme
nowe present.
Gathered and collected according to the
true copies and wrytinges certificatorie as wel
of the parties themselves that suffered,
as also out of the Bishops Registers,
which wer the doers thereof.

The length of the work is evidence that it was necessarily written over a considerable time-period from an abiding conviction rather than from overflowing spurts of anger or sporadic attempts to bait Church officials. Foxe never tires in his tales of the martyrs, one after another. His resistance to Antichrist is as strong in his last book as in his first.

The last section in his work before the Appendix is an account of a debate or a discussion which Foxe calls a "Conference of disceptation," attended at Queen Elizabeth's request by the best minds on both the Protestant and Catholic sides for the purpose of settling religious disputes still active at her accession. Of the Protestants

John Jewell's name is best known; of the Catholics Nicholas Harpsfield's is familiar. Evidently few of the problems were ever presented formally because, by Foxe's account, the Catholics quibbled over procedural details until everyone lost patience and the conference disbanded.¹²⁰ Since the Catholics seemed reluctant to face the issues, the Protestants won a victory of sorts from which Foxe assumes that the papacy has been vanquished satisfactorily in England. With this determination, he willingly ends his work.

The length also implies a large body of information and events from which to draw a fully developed segment of history complete enough to allow evaluation at a somewhat contemporary level. Foxe traces the identification of Antichrist from Nero in the first century to Boniface III and Boniface VIII in the seventh and the thirteenth. Nero persecuted Christians;¹²¹ Boniface III in about 607 assumed the title "universal bishop"¹²² (above, p. 16), in spite of Gregory's warning in about 600 that any churchman declaring himself to possess such jurisdiction clearly became the forerunner of Antichrist;¹²³ Boniface VIII actually revealed himself as Antichrist, according to Foxe, when he confirmed the Dominican and Franciscan orders of friars set up earlier in the thirteenth century by Popes Honorius III and Gregorius IX.¹²⁴ Once he settles Antichrist in the papacy during Wyclif's time, Foxe presents

numerous materials from theological and civil sources to give different viewpoints of contemporary events. In his attempts to show the relatively few legal instruments allowing Englishmen to be executed for religious reasons, he records the "Constitutions" of Archbishop Thomas Arundel (1409) (below, p. 225) and the Six Articles (1539) (Appendix D)--the official document confirming many Roman Catholic practices in the Anglican Church. He also records orders from the king prohibiting Bible reading at certain times and by certain groups such as common laborers and women. If Foxe is to be believed, most of the blame for the application of these laws belongs on the religious leaders who invoked them even sometimes when the civil ruler was not inclined to do so. He does not accuse his sovereign of unjustly punishing dissenters; the king or queen is said to be misinformed or pressured by the clergy into agreeing to the sentences. Foxe could not have known that the length and completeness of his work would qualify it to be the touchstone by which other earlier, shorter, and more fragmentary writings would be judged. He also could not have known that his tome would stand as the weightiest argument against Roman domination in England. Despite the length, the work is intended to be read as a narrative, rather than used occasionally as a reference, and the fact of its repeated printings gives evidence of its popularity. Changing times and receding fears about Antichrist and

Catholicism, however, reduced interest in the work so that about the time Foxe died it was viewed as either too sensational for pleasurable reading or too full of dull documents.

Foxe viewed Christian martyrdom from a broader aspect than most previous writers and gained a perspective which prompted him to declare that latter-day martyrs were as worthy of reverence as were first- and second-century martyrs since all were victims of Antichrist in some form.¹²⁵ He averred that evil forces have always pervaded world governments; yet age after age has nevertheless produced men and women who were willing to, and did, die for what they believed to be right and good. Foxe's longitudinal account of martyrdom showed the disastrous consequences resulting from religious systems that worked through civil authority to preserve themselves and the tragic difficulty of replacing those systems.

A limited idea of the work's historical scope is apparent from the eleven hundred names listed in the index of martyrs which represent the whole of Christian history beginning with Christ's disciples and extending through European and English martyrs contemporary with Foxe. He includes information about ancient persons mentioned only briefly by other writers. For instance, Foxe identifies a man named Nilus whose name appears in Danaeus' translation of A Treatise Touching Antichrist (1589), about whom

little is given in modern reference works; Foxe, however, discusses him briefly as well as another Bishop Nilus who was martyred in Egypt in the time of Diocletian (245-313). In this way Foxe's work, while detailing Antichrist's progress, preserves information displaced in more recent reference works by the movement of history to newer events.

The content of the work is far more inclusive than that found in previous ecclesiastical histories. Foxe quoted official records of laws passed under various rulers, parts of the Bishops' Register, letters and written accounts; he interviewed eye-witnesses and persons able to corroborate relevant facts. He put together much information that is otherwise available to the researcher only through diligent search and some that is no longer in existence because it was burned in the great fire of 1666. Even Foxe's critics used the work to formulate their objections, thereby commending the accuracy and appropriateness of the official material which Foxe includes.¹²⁶

Within the ideological scope various ideas are emphasized which seem unrelated or contradictory but which actually result from the complex situation bringing persecution on hundreds of Englishmen. Foxe could not, as early reformers had done, direct his criticism only at Rome, since some of his objections involved English clergy ostensibly separated from Rome except for the period of Mary's reign. Foxe's task required that he speak respectfully

of his monarch while diplomatically deploring the remnants of Catholicism permitted by the monarch in English laws and in the Anglican Church. He seems to have accomplished this delicate task, perhaps only because he wrote during Elizabeth's reign when most of the martyrs had already died.

Of course, many persons with Catholic sympathies objected to Foxe's work. Nicholas Harpsfield and Robert Parsons, or Persons, found a few incorrect dates, one or two series of events out of sequence, and a few examples of what they called "coarse language," but they could not successfully challenge the fact of the executions, the methods used, or the identity of the accusers. Some critics emphasized Foxe's Protestant bias and his manner of presenting the executions, but no critic found major weakness in his claims of what happened and why.

The two most serious objections arose while Foxe was still living, giving him a chance to clarify the problems. One accusation he admitted and one he explained. The first concerned John Marbeck, listed by Foxe in his first edition as a martyr. Foxe later determined that of the group who had been condemned with Marbeck, two were subsequently pardoned--Marbeck and one other. The second instance concerning a man named Grimwood was more spectacular. During a sermon in which the clergyman recounted from Acts and Monuments the terrible death of one Grimwood after he had falsely testified against an antipapist, a

man identifying himself as Grimwood stood up in the congregation. After further investigation, Foxe explained that two Grimwoods with the same first name had been involved in the incident and that one of them did indeed die as reported; the other, who had played a minor part, was the one who stood up during the sermon.¹²⁷

Some critics objected to Foxe's inclusion in his "Kalender"¹²⁸ of martyrs those who had died from disease or old age rather than from inquisitorial sentence to burning or torture, even though he designates such persons "confessor" rather than "martyr." In his defense Foxe argues from his understanding of the Greek word "martyria," which means "one who testifies" or "what one testifies":¹²⁹

And why may not I, in my calendar, call them by the name of martyrs, who were faithful witnesses of Christ's truth and testament, for which they were also chiefly brought unto that end?¹³⁰

Most of the confessors on the list had suffered in some way for their faith, though they had not died for it; and, as Foxe points out, the great majority of the persons named on the "Kalender" had actually been executed.

Acts and Monuments affords a wide view of how official and clerical documents and attitudes worked out in the lives of those who resisted what to them was Antichrist. Foxe's bias that the resistors were bound by conscience to die rather than give any degree of assent to Antichrist

leads him to speak sympathetically of the martyrs. Even though Sir John Oldcastle (known from Shakespeare's Henry IV plays as well as from history as an early Lollard leader) died over one hundred years earlier, Foxe expresses deep sorrow over the cruel execution he endured:

This terrible kind of death, with gallows, chains, and fire, appeareth not very precious in the eyes of men that be carnal, no more than did the death of Christ, when he was hanged up among thieves. "The righteous seemeth to die" (saith the wise man) "in the sight of them which are unwise, and their end is taken for very destruction . . . Yet is there expectation full of immortality. They are accounted for the children of God, and have their portion among the saints."¹³¹

Foxe does, however, relate official opportunities for retraction and mentions without rancor some who took advantage of them. Cranmer, accused of heresy about 1556, signed several recantations but was still executed to even old scores:

. . . And further, it seemed meet, according to the law of equality, that as the death of the duke of Northumberland of late, made even with Thomas More chancellor, that died for the church, so there should be one that should make even with Fisher of Rochester; and because that Ridley, Hooper, Ferrar, were not able to make even with that man, it seemed meet that Cranmer should be joined to them to fill up their part of equality.¹³²

Foxe looks with pity on Cranmer now set up on a stage after his public recantation to hear Dr. Cole deliver the sermon from which the above was taken. Foxe's detailed description sounds like an eye-witness account:

The lamentable case and sight of that man gave a sorrowful spectacle to all christian eyes that beheld him. He that late was archbishop, metropolitan, and primate of England, and the king's privy councillor, being now in a bare and ragged gown, and ill favouredly clothed, with an old square cap, exposed to the contempt of all men, did admonish men not only of his own calamity, but also of their state and fortune. For who would not pity his case, and bewail his fortune . . . to see such a prelate . . . in his old years to be deprived of his estate.
 . . .133

Such were the rewards of Antichrist to those who opposed his power under Queen Mary. Foxe's sympathy, however, does not prevent him from giving a detailed report about the process leading up to the actual execution.

Foxe's method of presenting the martyrs is exemplified in his account of Anne Askew (also included by Bale, above, p. 70), a thirty-five-year-old woman put on the rack and burned at Smithfield in 1546 for her Lollard beliefs. The thirteen pages Foxe devotes to her story are mostly a collection of documents and letters, titled as follows:

"The First Examination before the Inquisitors,
 A.D. 1545" (5 pages)
 "The Latter Apprehension and Examination of
 the worthy Martyr of God, Mistress Anne
 Askew, A.D. 1546" (1/2 page)

- "The sum of my Examination before the King's Council at Greenwich" (1 page)
- "The Confession of me Anne Askew, for the time I was in Newgate, concerning my belief" (1 page)
- "The sum of the Condemnation of me Anne Askew at the Guildhall" [This was her first examination.] (1/2 page)
- "My Letter sent to the Lord Chancellor" (1/4 page)
- "My Faith briefly written to the King's Grace" (1/4 page)
- "The Effect of my Examination and Handling since my Departure from Newgate" (1-1/2 pages)
- "Anne Askew's Answer unto John Lacel's Letter" [John Lacel was burned with Anne.] (1/4 page)
- "The Purgation or Answer of Anne Askew, against the false Surmises of her Recantation" (1/4 page)
- "The Confession of her Faith which Anne Askew made in Newgate before she surrendered" (1/2 page)
- "A Prayer of Anne Askew" [Poem] (1 page)¹³⁴

Foxe interjects from the Bishops' Register Bonner's account of her first examination, showing that Bonner's account does not agree with Anne's. He also includes short transitions, explanations, and a two-page statement about the manner of her death. When the time arrived for her execution, clergymen seated to get a good view of the proceedings learned that Anne and the three who were to be executed with her had tied explosives to their bodies to shorten their misery, whereupon the men hurriedly moved their observation post to a safer distance.¹³⁵ Foxe points ironically to their fear of a few sparks while the ones they condemned were burning to death. Here, to Foxe, was

an unmistakable scene of Antichrist in all his pride and fearfulness.

Although Acts and Monuments was written primarily as the history of English martyrs who died because of their opposition to Antichrist in the Catholic Church, later generations used parts of it as a warning for the future. William Forbush took the most vivid accounts, added stories of religious martyrs from subsequent years, and compiled them into one volume called Fox's Book of Martyrs.¹³⁶ With most of the supporting material left out, the unimaginable suffering in one execution after another either anguishes the reader or makes him think the stories are exaggerated. George Townsend, who wrote the biography for the edition used in this study, expresses his hope that the reissue of Foxe's account will reinforce the Englishman's love of truth:

The spirit of his [Foxe's] pages appeals to that peculiar highmindedness of his Christian countrymen, which, I trust, . . . will ever be with them, to love truth for the truth's sake, and to detest persecution, whether from an infatuated church, a misguided sovereign, or an excited people.¹³⁷

Townsend goes on to say that the kind of oppression which Foxe documented is a future possibility for England if the principles which Foxe demonstrated are forgotten. He feels that a return to popery would be the worst thing that

could happen to England, and remembering the martyrs will help prevent that occurrence.¹³⁸

Although Bale and others described some of the same martyrdoms, Foxe's less spectacular work includes, expands, and explains much of what earlier, and some later, writers had to say about Antichrist in medieval and Renaissance England.

Notes

¹John Wyclif, The English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted, ed., F.D. Matthew (London: for the E.E.T.S. by Trübner & Co., 1880), p. 457. [Christ had not his own goods wherein he could rest his head; men say this pope has more than half of the empire without robbing anyone. Christ was most meek and willing to serve and girded himself with a cloth and washed his disciples' feet, as the Gospel of John tells; the pope sits on his throne and makes lords kiss his feet. Christ went meekly from place to place and preached the gospel and taught in poverty; the pope dwells in Avignon and does not this but the contrary. And so, since antichrist is he that is against Christ, it seems by his feigned life that he is clearly antichrist.]

²Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XXIII, 822.

³Wyclif, p. 92.

⁴Wyclif, p. 92. [For they do not their spiritual office after God's law, and yet greedily gather dimes and offerings and procurations, and send much gold coine for the first fruits, and to purchase and appropriate to them more benefices, privileges, and indulgences; and this is theft and simony if God's law and man's reason be sought, and the seller of benefices and spiritual things and the giver of gold for them are cursed of God and man and are foul heretics. And sometime the court of Rome is the worldly adversary to our land, and namely in favor of our enemies; but more harm comes of spiritual enmity, when they envenom our people with cursed simony and maintaining and consent of sin by blind obedience. For if any worldly prelate wishes to do any wrong against right and reason, he shall receive a privilege or exemption or sentence of curse (freedom from penalty) for his gold sent and spent at Rome, and much gold goes out of our land by long pleading at Rome, and right is bourne down, and sin contained and maintained, that with difficulty dare any man speak against it; and thus is our land robbed of gold, and curse and heresy brought in, and sin long maintained, and righteousness stopped.]

⁵Wyclif, p. 100. [For many priests now keep neither matrimony or charity, but defoul wives, maidens, widows

and nuns in each manner of lechery, and children are murdered, and sin against nature (homosexuality) is not completely gone. For Satan purposes to purchase worldly honor and plenty of worldly goods and welfare and idleness for young priests, and dalliance with women and secret meetings; and is ready night and day to steer both parties to lechery, and sometimes to hide their sin by false oaths and murdering of children, and sometimes habitually practice it openly and not be ashamed of it; and by this high prelates earn many thousand pounds in a few years and hold great households as lords, and thus by this hypocrisy in both points are lords and priests and common people encumbered, and God's law despised and broken, and sins gathered in great hordes.]

⁶Wyclif, pp. 328-345.

⁷Wyclif, p. 462.

⁸Wyclif, p. 463.

⁹Wyclif, p. 463.

¹⁰Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XI, 943 and XIII, 3.

¹¹English Wycliffite Writings, ed., Anne Hudson (Cambridge: University Press, 1978), p. 8.

¹²John A. F. Thomson, The Later Lollards 1414-1520 (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 242.

¹³Hudson, p. 164.

¹⁴A. G. Dickens, Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York 1509-1558 (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 9.

¹⁵Thomson, p. 249.

¹⁶Margaret Deanesly, The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions (Cambridge: University Press, 1920; rpt. 1966), p. 352.

¹⁷Hudson, p. 147.

¹⁸Hudson, p. 122.

¹⁹Hudson, p. 124.

²⁰Deanesly, p. 156.

²¹Hudson, p. 7.

²²Hudson, p. 10.

²³Hudson, p. 8.

²⁴Hudson, p. 147.

²⁵The Lanterne of Ligt (c. 1409), ed. Lillian M. Swinburn (London: for the E.E.T.S. by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., o.s. 151, 1917), p. 146.

²⁶Lanterne, pp. viii, x.

²⁷Lanterne, p. 7.

²⁸Lanterne, p. 2. [For now the devil has spoiled this world by his lieutenant antichrist . . . The enemy of God has sowed tares among the seed of Jesus Christ. This wicked man is antichrist.]

²⁹Lanterne, p. 14. [No man shall preach God's Word in those days neither hear it unless he have a special letter of license that is called the mark of this beast antichrist.]

³⁰Lanterne, p. 6. [To speak in general--what is most common--antichrist is in every man that lives against Christ, as Saint John says.]

³¹Lanterne, pp. 17-20.

³²Lanterne, pp. 17-18. ["Lord, suffer thou to ordain a lawmaker upon the people in punishment of their sin, for they will not consent to the truth." This means: Anti-christ uses false lucrative or profitable laws, such as absolutions, indulgences, pardons, privileges, and all other treasure belonging to heaven that is brought in to

sell, to spoil the people of their worldly goods; and principally these new constitutions by whose strength antichrist interdicts churches, summons preachers, suspends receivers, and deprives them of their benefice, curses hearers, and takes away the goods of them that further the preaching of a priest--yea though it were an angel of heaven--unless that priest show the mark of the beast, which is turned into a new name and called a special letter of license, for the more blinding of the common people.]

³³Sacra Biblia (Gutenberg Bible, Mainz, Germany, 1450-1456; facsim. rpt. New York: Pageant Books, Inc., 1961), Rev. 16.13. [I saw from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and the mouth of the false prophet three unclean spirits go out in the form of frogs.]

³⁴Lanterne, p. 19.

³⁵Lanterne, pp. 14, 16.

³⁶Lanterne, p. 15.

³⁷Lanterne, p. 16.

³⁸Lanterne, p. 19. [Frogs sitting in holes by the edge of the water take by violence the land above them and on either side of them. But for that which is underneath them, they want no thanks, neither will they lease it nor loose it. So these three spirits croaking in covetousness, gluttony, and lechery betoken antichrist in his three aspects. For they take from lords that are above them much part of their goods with the tongue of flattery and feigned hypocrisy. And of the common people around them, they wile into their hands much part of their goods. But what they have gained, they hold fast against the authority of both God's laws (Old and New Testaments?).]

³⁹An Apology for Lollard Doctrines, ed. James Henthorn Todd (Dublin, 1842; rpt. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968), p. 8.

⁴⁰Apology, pp. 53, 54.

⁴¹Apology, p. 54.

⁴²Apology, p. 54.

⁴³Hudson, p. 10.

⁴⁴Thomson, pp. 48, 65, 76, 80, 84, 126, 129, 141, 144.

⁴⁵Thomson, p. 65.

⁴⁶Thomson, p. 126.

⁴⁷Thomson, p. 128.

⁴⁸Thomson, p. 129.

⁴⁹The Great Bible (1540) (University Microfilms, Reel 104, 1941).

⁵⁰The Great Bible (1550) (University Microfilms, Reel 106, 1941).

⁵¹The Bible in Englyshe (1541) (University Microfilms, Reel 105, 1941).

⁵²The Bible, ed. Miles Coverdale (1550) (University Microfilms, Reel 105, 1941).

⁵³John Swan, trans., A Treatise Touching Anti-Christ by Lambert Danaeus (London, 1589) (University Microfilms, Reel 213, 1944), p. 42.

⁵⁴William Tyndale, The Work of William Tyndale, ed. G[ervaise] E. Duffield (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), p. 30. All further references to this work appear in the text.

⁵⁵William Tyndale, Introduction to Different Doctrinal Treatises and Portions of the Holy Scripture, ed. Henry Walter (Cambridge: University Press, 1848; rpt. Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968), p. 336.

⁵⁶John Foxe, The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe, with a Life by George Townsend (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1965), V, 585.

⁵⁷Deanesly, pp. 194, 196.

⁵⁸Deanesly, p. 162.

⁵⁹Deanesly, p. 188.

⁶⁰Tyndale, Introduction to Different Doctrinal Treatises, p. 234.

⁶¹Tyndale, Introduction to Different Doctrinal Treatises, pp. 144-145.

⁶²Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., I, 527.

⁶³Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., VI, 214.

⁶⁴Wilbur M. Smith, "The English Bible and Its Development," in The Holy Bible, Open Bible edition (New York: Thomas Nelson, Publishers, 1975), p. 1221.

⁶⁵Smith, p. 1219.

⁶⁶Smith, p. 1222.

⁶⁷Smith, p. 1222.

⁶⁸James Gairdner, Lollardy and the Reformation in England (New York: Burt Franklin: Research and Source Work Series #84, 1908), I, 367-368.

⁶⁹Gairdner, I, 370.

⁷⁰Gairdner, I, 370.

⁷¹Gairdner, II, 243.

⁷²William Tyndale, Five Books of Moses Called the Pentateuch, ed., J. I. Mombert (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967), p. 475.

⁷³Tyndale, Pentateuch, p. 74.

⁷⁴Tyndale, Pentateuch, p. 201.

⁷⁵Tyndale, Pentateuch, p. 220.

⁷⁶John Bale, Select Works of John Bale, ed. Henry Christmas (Cambridge: The University Press, 1849; rpt. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968), pp. 62-63.

⁷⁷Foxe, V, 121, 127.

⁷⁸Tyndale, Introduction to Different Doctrinal Treatises, p. 340.

⁷⁹John Bale, The Image of Both Churches (London, 1548; facsim. rpt. New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1973), sig. B3^r. [I doubt not that within a short time the Roman Church shall be wholly turned over into the bottomless pit again with all her heathenish ceremonies, superstitions and sorceries, and will never return again anymore than the great, mighty millstone that is thrown into the sea, at which time Christ will be restored unto his rightful spouse, the true Church.]

⁸⁰Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., II, 969.

⁸¹Image, sig. r1^r. [Yea, they (some of the elect) have been so dazed with their (the Catholic Church's) practices, and so tangled with their customes, that, as men losing their wits, without all Godly remembrance, reason, wisdom, discretion, understanding, judgment, and grace, the laws of God laid apart, the commandments neglected and the Scripture despised, they have not only kneeled, crossed themselves, kissed, set up candles, and held up their hands before rotten posts (images), but they have also called their fathers (saint worship?) in heaven. Yea--I ask God's mercy a thousand times--I have been one of them myself.]

⁸²Bale, Select Works, p. viii.

⁸³Bale, The Dramatic Writings of John Bale, ed., John S. Farmer (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1966), p. [2].

⁸⁴Bale, Select Works, p. xi.

⁸⁵Bale, Select Works, p. 50.

⁸⁶Bale, Select Works, p. 140.

⁸⁷Bale, Select Works, p. 154.

⁸⁸Bale, Select Works, p. 203.

⁸⁹Bale, Select Works, p. 203.

⁹⁰Bale, Select Works, p. 203.

⁹¹Bale, Select Works, p. 203.

⁹²Bale, Select Works, p. 208.

⁹³Bale, Select Works, p. 231.

⁹⁴Bale, Select Works, p. 231.

⁹⁵Bale, Select Works, p. 231.

⁹⁶Bale, Select Works, p. 231.

⁹⁷Bale, Select Works, p. 231.

⁹⁸Bale, Select Works, p. 233.

⁹⁹Bale, Image, sig. f7. [By the monstrous, ugly, and most odious beast rising out of the sea, with 7 heads and 10 horns, is meant the universal or whole Antichrist comprehending in him all the wickedness, fury, falsehood, forwardness, deceit, lies, craftiness, tricks, subtilities, hypocrisy, tyranny, mischiefs, pride, and all other devilishness from all his malicious members which hath been since the beginning. The exceeding presumption of them that hate thee, blessed Lord (says David) arises day by day. Continually thy enemies grow, always they increase, and evermore they prosper in this world. Not from the steadfast or sure ground (which are the Lord's people) arises this beast, but out of the wavering sea, or from the fickle fellowship and unstable multitude of the ungodly. For the wicked sort, according to Isaiah, are the raging sea that can not rest, whose water foams with the mire and gravel. No peace is among the ungodly (says the Lord), no unity, no charity, nor mutual Christian love. Therefore, it pleased the Holy Ghost to inspire John, after his secret or personal vision, to describe this mighty antichrist in his right colors, according to what he had seen, for the fore-warning of Christ's people.]

¹⁰⁰Bale, Image, sig. f8^r.

¹⁰¹Bale, Image, sig. g1-2. [3 This beast had, upon his 10 horns, 10 crowns, signifying his victory, dominion, and primacy over the universal world, and that he through the wickedness of the people, is the unworthy captain and prince thereof. In this one point does the Dragon differ from the beast, the devil from his members, or Satan from his carnal synagogue: he (the Dragon or the devil or Satan--all one and the same, apparently) had 7 crowns on his 7 heads, but they (the beast, the devil's members, or Satan's carnal synagogue) have 10 crowns on their 10 horns. For what he must do through simple suggestions, they can do with the double power of co-action with him. What he attempts to do through persuasion, they may enforce and compel. Whereas he must move carefully, they may constrain by rigorous authority. When he has proposed an error, they may, by their power, establish it for an infallible truth, and make it a necessary article of the Christian faith, as they have done of purgatory, pardons, confession, the worshipping of saints, the Latin service, and such like. When he has once made a lie--as he is the father of all lies--they may authorise it for an extra-Scriptural truth, as they have done many times. Much more mischief can they do, being his spiritual instruments, than he can do alone, as greatly appears by their works. Satan could never have put Christ to death, had he not entered into Judas, and so betrayed Christ, and had he not entered into the bishops and lawyers and so condemned him. Never would have the apostles or all other Godly preachers been put out of the way had not those mitered Mahometes and priests continued still their old fear-producing threats.]

¹⁰²Bale, Image, sig. a5^v. [Satan, upon the pinnacle of the Temple with Jesus during the temptation, never bestowed his alleged Scripture more perversely than this critic, Momus, has interpreted certain of my marginal references, nor put them further from a correct understanding. But I forgive him for it with this fore-warning for this time--though this is not the first time he has made an unscholarly point--if he will leave off his quarreling. My second marginal reference, 1 Cor. 6. in the preface, is not set there to authorize the mention of the Apocalypse, as he most falsely and contrary to my meaning has interpreted it, but it affirms that Christian believers are Christ's members, who ought of necessity by the Holy Ghost's direction to hear and to read the words of the said book. For I know that the Epistle to the Corinthians was written

by Paul ten years at the least before St. John's Apocalypse. And no less is he than a false prophet who objects to my mentioning Jeremiah rebuking Babylon for her wickedness.]

¹⁰³Bale, Image, sig. a4^v. [But two cruel enemies have my just labors had, one of whom has falsified my work, and the other (Momus) has blasphemed, which has caused me to leave them (the marginal references) out in all that here follows. The printers are the first enemy, whose heady haste, negligence, and covetousness commonly corrupt all books. These printers have both misplaced the references and also changed the numbers in them to the derogation of the truth, even though they had at hand two learned correctors (proof-readers) who took all possible pains to preserve the accuracy of the references.]

¹⁰⁴Bale, Dramatic Writings, pp. 21, 23.

¹⁰⁵Bale, Dramatic Writings, p. 166.

¹⁰⁶Bale, King John in Dramatic Writings, pp. 171-294. All further references to this play will appear in the text.

¹⁰⁷Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XII, 275.

¹⁰⁸Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XII, 275, quoting Father Thurston in Dublin Review, Jan. 1900.

¹⁰⁹John S. Farmer, ed., The Dramatic Writings of John Bale (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1966), p. 323.

¹¹⁰John Neville Figgis, The Divine Right of Kings, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1922), p. 14.

¹¹¹Foxe, I, xxvii-xxxvi.

¹¹²Foxe, I, xxvii.

¹¹³Foxe, I, xxxii.

¹¹⁴Foxe, I, 5.

¹¹⁵Foxe, IV, 705.

¹¹⁶Foxe, VIII, 88.

¹¹⁷Foxe, IV, 145-147.

¹¹⁸Foxe, II, 727.

¹¹⁹Foxe, II, 727.

¹²⁰Foxe, VIII, 679.

¹²¹Foxe, I, 100.

¹²²Foxe, I, 341.

¹²³Foxe, I, 39.

¹²⁴Foxe, II, 726.

¹²⁵Foxe, I, xxvi, xxvii.

¹²⁶Foxe, I, 182.

¹²⁷Foxe, I, 175-177.

¹²⁸Foxe, I, xxxvii.

¹²⁹A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, ed., Joseph H. Thayer (Wheaton, Ill.: Evangel Publishing Company, 1974), p. 391.

¹³⁰Foxe, III, 53, n. 2.

¹³¹Foxe, III, 542.

¹³²Foxe, VIII, 85.

¹³³Foxe, VIII, 84.

¹³⁴Foxe, V, 537-550.

¹³⁵Foxe, V, 550.

¹³⁶William Forbush, Fox's Book of Martyrs (Philadelphia:
The John C. Winston Company, 1926).

¹³⁷Foxe, I, 164.

¹³⁸Foxe, I, 12.

SECTION FOUR
MINOR THEOLOGICAL WRITERS

Many writers of less ambitious works than Foxe's Acts and Monuments dealt with the theme of Antichrist throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and doubtless had some further effect on attitudes toward the Catholic Church in England. These works continued to appear as long as some members of the royal family were Catholic communicants or had Catholic sympathies. The religious loyalties of the rulers from 1509 to 1702 explain some of the ever-present concern felt by English Protestants:

1509-1547	Henry VIII	supported either Catholic or Protestant beliefs, according to what was expedient.
1547-1553	Edward VI	child king (9 to 15 years of age) susceptible to the influence of whoever was most powerful at Court.
1553-1558	Mary I	staunch Catholic
1558-1603	Elizabeth	young, unmarried woman when she came to the throne, who might have, at any time, married a Catholic prince. As

		it turned out, she supported the state church and helped to define its separation from Rome.
1603-1625	James I	strengthened state church; wrote against Antichrist.
1625-1649	Charles I	married a French Catholic princess.
1660-1685	Charles II	Catholic sympathizer, baptized on his deathbed.
1685-1688	James II	openly a Catholic; deposed.
1688-1702	William and Mary	Protestant, as was Mary's sister Ann, who succeeded to the throne in 1702.

From the Act of Supremacy (1534) until the reign of William and Mary, every time one monarch succeeded another, the fear that a Catholic might come to the throne inspired more writing on Antichrist.

Thomas Lancaster

Thomas Lancaster (fl. 1550) carried out his battle against Antichrist by objecting to the retention by the Anglican Church of the Roman Catholic practice of offering "communion in one kind," whereby the laity received only the bread or wafer while the priest drank the wine:

. . . it [Communion in one kind] is and
shal remayn the ryght Supper of Anti-
chryst.¹

Lancaster argued for a return to a more Biblical procedure in a work dedicated to King Edward VI:

. . . It hath plesed him [God] to send us
your Maiestie his derely beloved seruaunte
our most vertuous lawful and godlye kyng
to ouerthorowe (not a parte) but all
Antychrystes kyngdome, by your diuine
polecy and godly enterpryses.²

The work discusses what the Communion service should be
and how the Roman Church had distorted it:

Fyrste, they [previously mentioned "ungodly
shameles shavelings"] haue conuerted and
chaun[g]ed, thys holye and Blessed supper,
of our Lord wyth ther false learnynge and
auctoritye out of his ryght use and haue
lerned it to be a dayly sacrifice for our
sinnes.³

In the period after Henry VIII, increasing mention is
made in discussions of the Communion service about the
Catholic belief that mass was a daily repetition of
Christ's death for sin, a logical extension of transub-
stantiation. The Protestants strongly objected to what
they viewed as symbolic repeated crucifixion and
further displacement of Christ. Usually the writer
attributed the Catholic idea of Communion to the priests'
ignorance of the Scriptures:

. . . With thys same learnynge haue they
driuen Chryste Jesus out of his fathers
stoole [chair], out of heaven, and haue
set in his place an ungodly preist with
a pece [piece] of breade, with the same
learnynge haue they rob[b]ed chryst Jesus
of his euerlastyng and perpetual offyce
that is the office of an aduocate, and
haue put it upon a pece of breade and a
deuylls [devil's] seruaunt whiche knowes
not one title ryght of ^e_y word of God.⁴

Though spelling, grammar, and punctuation in Lancaster's work are somewhat more fanciful than in many other minor works, the author's ideas are striking and his images vivid as he explains the Church's alteration of the Communion sacrament from a reminder of Christ's death to an object of worship:

O Lorde haue mercye upon us for we are more folish and haue lese understanding tha[n] the gentles [Gentiles or heathen] haue had from the begynnyng. For they haue worshipped for god the sonne, Mone, and Sterres, whiche do declare power and myght in all warynge [intelligent] creatures. They haue I saye honored open [actual] Serpentes and Dragons with other creatures whiche had power, myght and a lyuing sprite in them, but we whiche boste oureselves of the name of Chryste prayes to and worshippinges a pece of breade, and a suppe of wine.⁵

Beliefs in regard to the sacrament of Communion figured prominently in the conflict with Antichrist. Unacceptable answers to questions on certain aspects hastened the deaths of Anne Askew and others who refused to adopt the teaching of the Church. Lancaster's work explained and openly supported the beliefs of those who chose to understand Communion as they perceived it to be taught in the Scripture at a time when such a view could be a capital offense.

Writer from Roanne

During Mary's reign, an anonymous Englishman wrote from Roanne, France, to encourage family or friends who were facing persecution from Antichrist in England. He implicitly recognizes that Christ's followers must at times endure persecution:

For by these means [torture] God wyll trye his elect as gold is tried in the fornace [furnace] and by these frutes [fruits] shal thei bring themselves to be knowen . . . For as he that in suffering pacientlie for the gospel of God, is therby knowen to be of Christ: even so in like manner is the persecutor of them knowen therby to be a member of Antichriste.⁶

. . . That man that giveth his life for the truth taketh the readiest way unto life. He that hath the Popes curs for the truth is surer of Christes blessing.⁷

Whether the writer had been living in France or had fled there from England is not clear. More than likely he had joined one of the English communities of exiles on the Continent from which many encouraging letters went back home.⁸ These foreign settlements were looked on as the remnant through which God would in the future "set up again the lantern of his word in England."⁹ The Roanne writer conveys the intensity of one who is seeking to cheer on the warriors in the midst of the battle. He is aware that the martyrs' deaths will eventually fortify

the position of the dissenters:

Shrink not my brethren and sisterne, . . .
 What a spectacle shal it be to the worlde,
 to behold so godlye a felowshyp as the
 seruauntes of God, in so iust a quarel as
 the gospell of Christe.¹⁰

Though many did recant when they were faced with the actual prospect of death or after seeing an actual burning, this author is not writing to these weak souls, but to those who will stand firm in their beliefs against their persecutor, Antichrist:

Now shal it appeare whether you haue
 builded vpon the fleeting sandes, or
 vpon the vnmoueable rocke Christ,
 which is the foundatio[n] of the
 apostles and prophets.¹¹

An unsigned poem at the beginning of the epistle reminds readers of the reward which awaits those who must endure the ultimate power of Antichrist's representatives:

[Not legible] with pacience,
 With Christ to bear the cros of paine
 which can and wil the reco[m]pence,
 A thousand fold with ioyes againe
 Let nothing cause thi hart to quail
 Lau[n]ch out thi bote, hoise vp the sail
 Put from the shore.
 And be thou sure thou shalt atain
 Vnto the port that shall remayne,
 Forever more.¹²

Miles Coverdale

Miles Coverdale (1483?-1569), among others, published a collection of letters from various martyrs; most, if not all, sounded triumphant and ready to die for their principles. Some show sorrow at leaving loved ones or fear of endangering family members. These letters are poignant reminders that sometimes the cost of resistance to Anti-christ was poverty, imprisonment, or death for their families as well as for the martyrs themselves. Not often noted is how the deaths affected for years the lives of widows and orphans. The martyrs themselves had no way of knowing how they would survive. Sitting in prison, expecting the execution which Foxe's "Kalender" confirms for February 8, 1555, Laurence Saunders wrote to his wife and son:

Deare wife reioyce in our gracious
God and his oure Christe . . . that in
any part I most unworthy wretch should
be made worthy to beare witnesses unto
his everlasting veritie, which Anti-
christ with his, by mayne force (I per-
ceave) & by most impudent pryde and
boasting will goe aboute to suppressse.
Remember God alway, my deare wyfe, and
so that Gods blessing light upon you and
our Samuel . . . be merry & grudge not
agaynst God & pray, pray.¹³

Robert Crowley

Writings and letters during the reign of Mary I lost the polemical nature found in many previous writings and took on the immediacy of the main event. Thirty years later (1587), Robert Crowley (1518?-1588), having lived through Mary's turbulent reign and the questions of Elizabeth's early years, could write a calm response to a list of questions formulated twelve years earlier in France. The title of the work--A Deliberate Answere Made to a Rash Offer, Which a Popish Antichristian Catholique Made to a Learned Protestant (as He Saieth) and Caused to be Published in Printe: Anno. Do. 1575--is followed by this explanation of the work:

Wherein the Protestant hath plainly & substantially prooved, that the papists that doo nowe call themselves Catholiques are in deed Antichristian schismatiks: and that the religious protestants, are in deed the right Catholiques.¹⁴

The intensity of the differences between the Protestant and his rival had so diminished that these twelve-year-old questions from a foreign country appear to have been answered in an extended period of leisure, not only for the questioner, but for whoever might chance to come across and happen to read the work. The dispute is presented in the realm of the empirical:

I doo not require any of you to give
credit to that which I have written:
before you have tried the same and
found it worthy of credit.¹⁵

The questioning Catholic had posed twenty-two "offers" and six questions to which Crowley spoke. The "offers" regard recurring issues, almost as if in the intervening years between Wyclif and Crowley the points in the dispute had not changed at all. Most of the questions and most of the answers, dealing with topics such as the authority of the pope, the duties of the Church, and the merits of the Eucharist, had been written before. This very general work may have been directed toward informing Crowley's Protestant readers as much as converting his Catholic opponents. In the process of concluding that the Roman Church is not the true universal church, he expresses the belief that Peter's service as bishop at Rome cannot be verified; that some popes were very wicked and that one was a woman ("an arrant whore"); that there have been as many as three popes at once;¹⁶ and that Gregory I (590-604) was the last Christian pope,¹⁷ none of which is new information. But it might have seemed so to a generation of Englishmen born after the trials of Mary's reign. Crowley's work at times is almost academic; certainly he tried to be as objective as possible:

Whatsoever any of you shal write touching
this matter: I will reade it deliberately,

and without all parciall affection, with earnest prayer to the almighty, for the direction of his holy spirite, whereby I may be stayed from straying out of the way of truth.¹⁸

But Crowley does not maintain this disinterested stance for long and within a short space begins to name the pope and his church "Antichrist" and "Antichristian":

. . . The romish Catholique Church . . . hath bin, and is still led by the spirit of Antichrist.¹⁹

. . . It may be said, that they [popes since Boniface III] are all Antichristian.²⁰

For the Roman Church was not altogether fallen away from the Catholique Religion, before shee had taken upon hir the title of Antichrist.²¹

Though it is somewhat tempered, Crowley's opposition to the Catholic Church as it exhibited the traits of Antichrist is consistent throughout his work.

John Swan

Near the time when Crowley was writing, John Swan (fl. 1635) issued a translation of a Continental treatise on the Antichrist originally composed in Latin. Swan translated it as A Treatise Touching Antichrist (1589), giving his reasons for doing so:

. . . [This work is] meete in these days to be considered, where-in, the Kingdom of the Beast is by force and treacherie

sought to be reuiued: and published for the encouragement of those which ioyne in the intended actions against the Spaniard and other wise, for the further ouerthrow of Antichrist, and enlarging of Christ his Kingdome. . . .²²

We haue seene Antichrist euen in this our Realm, (as well as in many other places of Christendome) to haue taken a notable, both fall and foyle ["defeat in an enterprise": OED]. In so much as who so had lived in the daies of the famous King Henry the eyght, (Whome it pleased God to use as the chiefest instrument to dismount the monster, and give him his deadly wound) to haue seen then the zeale and forwardnes that was in the Nobilitie, the painefulnes [painstaking] of the cleargie, both by pen and in pulpit, the triumphes and ioyfull acclamations of the people, he would haue thought that neither Antichrist himselfe would euer haue looked back, with hope to haue set foote in amongst us againe, nor that in the heart of any one true Englishman (especially after so long a farewell) hee might finde any residence or fauourable entertainment.²³

History does not bear out Swan's picture of a conclusive, datable, nationally supported ouster of Catholic influence from England on passage of the Act of Supremacy (1534) by Henry VIII. As long as the Six Articles were in effect much of Catholicism remained in Anglican worship, and those remnants were looked on by some as the continuing influence of Antichrist. In Swan's eyes, however, the invasion attempt by the Spanish in 1588 was a warning that Antichrist might try by force to return to England. This "late cruell attempt of the Spanyards,"²⁴ however, was not the only cause for concern to Protestant England

in this decade. Though the Spanish had been repulsed, the possibility still existed in 1588 that Elizabeth might marry a Catholic prince and welcome his religion to please him. Swan's alert spoke to all who recognized likely opportunities for Antichrist's reinstatement in England.

On the title page, Swan proclaims that his work will deal with

. . . the Place, the Time, the Forme, the workmen, the Vphoulders, the Proceedings; and lastly, the ruine and ouerthrowe of the Kingdom of Antichrist.²⁵

He promises further that "manie darke, and hard places both of Daniell and the Revelation" will be explained. The work was originally written, Danaeus says in his preface, because

. . . there is not among them ["poynts called into controuersie"] any one . . . more difficult, or lesse agreed vpon by such as write, then that question which concerneth Antichrist.²⁶

Swan, and presumably Danaeus, held the Society of Jesus responsible for much of the Antichristian activity, characterizing the members of this group, founded in 1533 "to support and defend the Roman Church in its struggle with the 16th c. Reformers,"²⁷ as follows:

Againe, there haue of late started vp new Proctours, and Pettie-foggers to plead and prate in defence of this vsurped tyrannie. I meane the Iesuites

(a Kinde of Droanes among the Monkes, the vilest dreggs of all poperie . . .) These fellowes taking themselues for the principall supporters of the Antichristian Kingdom, they vaunt and bragge it out lustelie, (as indeed they sweate sore, poore soules, in doing the best they can).²⁸

On the question of whether representatives of Antichrist should be in turn eradicated by killing and burning, the writer (whether Swan or Danaeus is not clear) concludes that force may be used only under the following conditions:

If they break truce or violate conditions of public peace; when maintaining the Christian religion is joined with a quarrel of public ryght and justice; then may arms be used, but not only because they differ from us in religion.²⁹

Certainly many civil restrictions were laid on English Catholics, but at least in this work, vengeance is rejected.

John, a Monk

At the end of the translation from Danaeus, Swan includes three poems of which he says:

Some of these verses I have copied . . .
to shewe what opinion men in those days
had of the Romane Antichrist.³⁰

The verses are said to be from A Catalogue of Witnesses of the Truth by "Bernard, a Monk of Cluniacke" written around 1150. Swan capitalizes on the Catholic authorship, and

though the following poem does not mention Antichrist, Swan interprets it as being about Antichrist as he is manifested in some of the Roman hierarchy. The subject is the cupidity of Rome, a familiar theme by now:

The court of Rome doth ayme at marks, it
 sucks thy purse and soakes thy Arkes;
 If that you mind to spare your Arkes,
 come not at Popes nor patriarchs.
 But if you franklie give them markes, and
 with good gold stuffe up their Arkes,
 I warrant then you shall be free, from
 any kind of penalty.
 Who's within? Who's there? I. Why, what
 would ye? Come in.
 Bring you ought? No. Stand still. But
 I do. Go ye then in.³¹

The only requirement for entrance appears to be ability to pay. This early expression against the Church's simony indicates long-standing disagreement within the Church on this abuse. As the reformers' influence grew, they gave increasing emphasis to their criticisms of commercial spirituality. Since this abuse was so widespread and so historically objectionable, it might be expected that resistance to it would have been somehow reflected in the sixteenth century heresy trials, but very few of them mention it prominently.

Whether the Monk's satirical tone is present in the original Latin is not known, but in translation the satire makes the argument more palatable than Bale's diatribes on the same subject.

Oliver Ormerod

Oliver Ormerod (1580?-1626) believed that the Roman Church had not ceased attempts to regain its place in England even though in 1605 the pope no longer had any legitimate authority in that country and the Catholic Church had been restricted by the Penal Laws so that its members were without many of the civil freedoms enjoyed by most Englishmen. In The Picture of a Papist Ormerod declares his belief that the influence of Antichrist was still at work in England:

These are the times of which Christ foretold, that there should arise false Christs, and false Prophets . . . so that if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect: and of which Saint Paul prophesied, that Antichrist should come through the efficacy of Sathan. . . .³²

The Picture of a Papist describes a specific instance of how the papists carried out Antichrist's purposes in England. Just as, twenty-five years earlier, the Spanish Plot had inspired Swan to speak out against Antichrist through a translation of Danaeus' work, so the Gunpowder Plot (1605) induced Ormerod to blame the Catholics as instruments of Antichrist for planning to blow up the members of the English government at their work. Though it was usual to blame the Catholics for any unexplained misfortune, this accusation has a few more facts to support

it than some others had. Because the event was recent, Ormerod proclaims Antichrist as a present influence who had again attempted great harm to England rather than as a future apocalyptic figure. Contemplating the magnitude of the planned result, Ormerod uses terms rivaling Bale's for vigor; his subtitle states that he will present

. . . a relation of the damnable heresies, detestable qualities, and diabolically practises of sundry hereticks in former ages, and of the papists in this age.³³

This work is another that has the tone of a battle for survival rather than that of a scholarly exposition. The author proposes to prove two claims which will more irrevocably fasten the label "Antichrist" on the Church: first, that nearly every heresy condemned by the ancient church has since been accepted and taught by the Roman Church and, second, that papism is pure paganism.³⁴

To prove the first contention, Ormerod lists fifty-five groups accused of heresy in earlier days by the Roman Church, describes every heresy, and shows how, subsequently, the Church incorporated each heresy into its teachings. These evidences of false doctrine furnish Ormerod with proof that the Roman Church of his day differed widely from the early Christian Church. (King James later uses a similar argument to prove that the Catholic Church, not he, differed from the early Church [below, p. 200]).

To prove the second contention, Ormerod focuses on objects and persons other than God which the Catholics worshipped: crosses, saints, and Mary. He is particularly careful to show that the Church gave Mary the power to forgive sin; as evidence he quotes a prayer to her:

O happie mother, which doest purge
away our sinnes, by thy motherly
authoritie command our redeemer . . .
O Queene of heaven, mother most deare
to thy sonne, doe not thou despise mee,
unto thee alone I commend me.³⁵

Along with the above example, which he calls idolatry, Ormerod mentions 145 ways in which, he says, papists resemble pagans. In addition, he spends eighty-five pages constructing 25 parallels between Catholicism and Mohammedanism.³⁶ Although the comparison itself is not uncommon for that day, Ormerod presents an unusually detailed list of likenesses.

Having done all this, Ormerod still has his major subject--treason--to cover:

. . . a discourse of the late treason,
and of the late execution of some of the
Traitors: wherein is shewed the haynous-
nesse of their crime, and the lawfulness
of their punishment.³⁷

Early in the treatise he introduces the discovery of a popish plot to murder the king and his family, government officials, and any common people who happened to be in the

vicinity. He expresses horror to think of the historic buildings lost to posterity had the plot worked.³⁸ He makes it clear that Catholics were taught that they could lawfully kill any person who had been excommunicated from the Church, whether it was king or subject.³⁹ He accuses the Jesuits of planning the sequence of events that was to culminate in the explosion⁴⁰ and again stresses that papal representatives in England encouraged English Catholics to betray their country.⁴¹ At the end of the work he relates the punishment of some men involved in the plot. In the course of the book, he mentions three names connected with the plot: Thomas Percie,⁴² Guido Fawkes, and Thomas Winter.⁴³ The first and last are mentioned without much comment, but Fawkes, said to have been the sentinel, was also suspected of being the one designated to light the powder, because he had three matches when he was caught.⁴⁴ The account of their execution describes cruelties not unlike those practiced on the martyrs.⁴⁵ But Ormerod leaves no doubt that the reason for the executions was the planned treason, not their Catholic loyalties, which, however, he sees as the basis for their willingness to enter the plot. Some objections to the cruelty of the executions inspired him to write the account showing why the sentences were justified:

Written to stop the mouthes of those,
 that complaine of rigour, and scandalize
 the state of cruelty, in their iust
 seueritie [just severity].⁴⁶

Part of the work is in the form of a dialogue between Minister and Recusant, the term used for "one, especially a Roman Catholic, who refused to attend the services of the Church of England" (OED). The names serve to identify the Christian and the anti-Christian; Recusant's name declares his error as clearly as the opinions he states. Ormerod's purpose in using the dialogue seems to be more an attempt to organize his arguments than to allow for development of ideas or to entertain. The sensational qualities of his topic assured him an audience of Englishmen justifiably shocked by the near-success of the plot. Further outcry against Antichrist was a predictable result of the event.

Thomas Beard

In a calmer vein, Thomas Beard (d. 1632), Puritan author and instructor of Oliver Cromwell, wrote a 425-page work entitled Antichrist the Pope of Rome composed of five sections reminiscent of many things which had been written by previous men; but the scholarly earnestness in much of his work and the ideas not discussed before make it worthy to be considered. In the early pages, Beard defines what

to him was Antichrist. That nearly every writer has attempted to define this term indicates that no single sufficient definition has been written. I believe that they could not write a definitive meaning because writers had combined two or more concepts and called the combination by the name of one of the included concepts which already had a specific definition. The original concept to which the name "Antichrist" actually applied turned out to be the minor element in the combination, and the definers were faced with the problem of explaining the inclusion of the concepts layered over the original one. Each writer had his own way of doing it, none of which satisfactorily explained the whole matter. The explanations joining John's antichrist and the beast or beasts in Revelation were not founded on any convincing Scriptural link; they were composed of a series of assumptions manufactured in the authors' minds. Many times the assumptions were not stated or were repeated from previous writers; sometimes the writer just said that he believed that John's antichrist referred to figures in Revelation, Thessalonians, or Daniel. Beard makes the most complete attempt to join John's antichrist to the beast in Revelation. First, he mentions John's definition briefly; then, without any Scriptural support he says that John's antichrist was the "forerunner"⁴⁷ of Antichrist or the beast of Revelation, fixing his focus now in that book. Speaking

of Antichrist as one or both of the beasts or the Whore of Babylon, Beard says that though there will be only one Antichrist in the world at a given time, there will be many Antichrists because one will succeed another.⁴⁸ So far Beard has disregarded Scripture that indicates an increasing number of antichrists rather than an emergence of one super-Antichrist. But after showing how the pope fulfills all his requirements for Antichrist, Beard goes back to John's definition in an attempt to show that the pope also fits this description:

The Pope doth not in direct words deny this proposition, Jesus is Christ: Yet when he giueth vnto him a phantasticall body by his doctrine of transubstantiation, robbeth him of all his offices, and ioyneth others with him in the worke of Redemption, what doth he but by consequent deny him to be Christ?⁴⁹

Other authors, after progressing from 1 and 2 John into Revelation, stayed there or went on to Daniel or Thessalonians, seeing Antichrist in various figures, not returning to John's small books except for transitory references. Although Beard does take an unsupported leap from 1 and 2 John into Revelation in his initial definition, he comes back to 1 John to try to bridge the two concepts. He does not explain why he took the initial leap, but he does recognize the existence of the gap in his argument by attempting to explain it.

In his second section (pp. 10-36), Beard applies his initial definition of Antichrist to the pope, giving thirteen parallels between the two. Along with the usual reasons for calling the pope Antichrist (e.g. that Rome is the seat of Antichrist, that the pope sits in the church as if he were God), Beard adds ideas and images that seem to have been his own. In discussing the point that the pope claims to be Christ's vicar, Beard speaks of the Biblical image of the church as Christ's spouse and says the pope's claim to vicarage puts him in the position analogous to the third party in a marriage,⁵⁰ a description placing the pope in a perpetual symbolically adulterous relationship. In his fifth parallel, Beard points to the combined spiritual and temporal power assumed by the pope as a sign of Antichrist. As he watched the pope wield both political and spiritual influence in Europe, he viewed this exercise of dual authority as another usurpation of Christ's rightful position as king and high priest.

In his tenth parallel, Beard speaks of the popes' cruelty to each other, to kings, and to the Waldenses. The absence of reference to English martyrs seems remarkable. Several other English writers mention the persecution of these dissenting European groups (Waldenses, Albigenses, Cathari) which sprang up in the twelfth century. Accounts of mass persecutions against these people translated into English⁵¹ report thousands killed; the

numbers are so large as to be almost unbelievable. On a numerical scale, the sufferings of the Waldenses far outweigh those of the English martyrs; perhaps it was this evaluation that prompted Beard to mention the Waldenses as the outstanding victims of papal cruelty.

The eleventh and last parallel focuses on immorality in the papacy and the hierarchy. Beard quotes oft-repeated accusations and suggests that phrases such as "fat as a Monke," "crafty as a Friar," and "proud as a Prelate"⁵² corroborate the validity of the descriptions. He includes a poem⁵³ which recalls the story of Pope Joan (the woman pope said to have flourished around 855, the existence of whom was disproved by David Blondel in 1647⁵⁴) saying that the "virilities" of popes need no longer be verified objectively through a hole in the papal chair; the gender of the pope is now proved by his off-spring.⁵⁵ He quotes Pasquin (below, p. 173) as saying that "to be Pope and a good man together were almost a thing impossible."⁵⁶ After these mostly repetitious ideas he makes a rather cautious statement that things were improving in the papacy:

Since Luther's discovery of their abomination, they have bene thought not lesse vicious, yet more cautelous [cautious], as hauing in their view so many eyes to watch their dealings.⁵⁷

Following that, he states that the height of Antichrist's

activity lay in the years from 900-1417, the period when the most wicked popes lived.⁵⁸ Beard is fair enough to indicate that the popes most involved in his maledictions lived at least two hundred years before he wrote, just before the two-year hiatus (1415-1417) in the main line of popes (Appendix H). A few popes after that time, however, drew specific disapproval in a verse which he attributes to Pasquin, about Popes Sixtus IV (1471), Julius II (1503), Leo X (1513), Clement VII (1523), and Paul III (1534):

Bawdes ruled Sixtus, Julius Ganimedes,
A ruffian swayd of Leos power the raynes;
Fury and auarice Clement passedes [possessed?],
What hope then of they rule, O Paul,
remaynes?⁵⁹

Whether Beard's work was written as a response to the possibility of a Catholic successor to James, who died in 1625, is not stated, but Beard considered his subject of great importance:

This is that which causeth this Treatise
to come forth into publique, that they
which yet know not Antichrist may at
length know and detest him: and they
which both know and detest him, may be
confirmed in their knowledge, and en-
creased in their detestations.⁶⁰

He says that he is willing to seal his argument with his blood,⁶¹ although it had been twelve years since Legate, the last Englishman executed for religious reasons, had died.

The Discoverer

The last theological writing to be considered is called The Antichristian Principle Fully Discovered (1679),⁶² an unsigned treatise designed to catalogue the "Hellish Plots, Bloody Persecutions, Horrid Massacres, and most Inhumane Cruelties and Tortures" carried out by the Catholic Church against dissenters "for the cause of Religion only."⁶³ The writer states his intention to cover Europe, England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1160 until 1678--about five hundred years.⁶⁴ His purpose is again to speak out against Antichrist:

Let I say all the world judge, by all the bloody Tragedies which the Church of Rome hath acted, and promoted; whether that murtherous Principle be of Christ, or Antichrist, of God or the Devil; or which is more near to his holy doctrine.⁶⁵

Rome's cruelty had been discussed now for nearly three centuries; it is apparent that the name Antichrist symbolizing the Roman Church had become imbedded in English literature and thought.

This work contains fewer than fifty pages, but it is packed with information presented in a chronological and well-documented manner. Beginning with the persecution of the Waldenses in 1160, it arrives by page 33 at the sufferings of the English martyrs, providing a marginal note

that "Foxe's Book of Martyrs" was the source for this segment.

This unknown author's view of Antichrist in England passed over several areas which had concerned earlier writers, since some of the problems had been solved to the satisfaction of the Protestants by this time. The Scriptures in English were now available to lay persons; printing had made it possible to reproduce more copies at cheaper prices than when books had been copied by scribes; people could no longer be legally executed in England for religious reasons; and the Anglican Church was firmly established. It had been 145 years since Henry VIII separated the English church from Rome, and (counting thirty years as one generation) four cycles of men had adjusted the Anglican Church from within to make it acceptable to most Englishmen. In 1679, the author did not need to speak for freedom to read the Bible and to live by its teachings.

The work begins by reminding its readers how the Roman Church had maintained its hold on Europe. It lists places where people were massacred or burned by the hundreds or even thousands. It describes briefly some methods used: burning groups of people herded into a barn; tearing a man's bowels out into a basin, then killing him; pulling out eyes and performing other variations of torture before killing the victim. The cruel

acts were committed by soldiers in the armies of kings and noblemen loyal to the pope. The suffering and pain inflicted in the name of religion is difficult to comprehend, even if only one-half of what is described is true.

The author's immediate purpose, though, is not a rehearsal of the past, but an attempt to show how the Roman Church had changed its tactics in an England now mainly hostile to it. He says that after Elizabeth came to the throne, Rome sent to England

. . . the agents of the beast . . . now
become miners and Sappers of Kingdoms,
and the Emissaries of the Jesuits . . .
These are the cunning engines [engineers]
and framers of massacres and private murders.⁶⁶

He is speaking here of underground activity in English society--"miners" and "private murders." He mentions that five plots were discovered against Elizabeth's life,⁶⁷ implying that the motivations for them were religious:

They [agents of the beast, or Catholics]
tell them [English Catholics] that
Princes not professing the Romish
Religion, are absolutely fallen from
their title and authority . . . and
that 'tis a meritorious act to depose
or to kill such Princes.⁶⁸

But, he thanks God, Elizabeth outlived eight popes (Appendix G) and four Spanish kings, all Catholic. Besides plots on Elizabeth's life, he mentions the Gunpowder Plot (1605),

an event that is still memorialized on the English calendar. The author also blames the Catholics for setting fire to London in 1666.⁶⁹

It might be thought that since some of the issues had been resolved in England--not by changing the Roman Church, but by displacing it--that now English anti-Roman rhetoric might have moderated. But this is not the case for this author:

The venom of this Monster [persecution] being suck'd in with the principles of Popery, infects the blood and envenoms the Soul: Instead of being meek and humble, it makes them proud and arrogant; instead of observing the commands of Christ, it performs that of the Pope, though never [ever] so contrary: If Christ says, hurt no man, pray for your persecutors, submit to Magistrates, and Governours, the Pope and his Doctrine says, kill every man that is not of your Religion, curse those that disobey your commands, kill, stab, depose your King and Governours. This is the Doctrine, these the principles and commands of the Romish Church, and have been ever since she was polluted and defiled, and had once bestrid this bloody Monster to maintain her pride and greatness.⁷⁰

The strength of such resistance to Catholicism resulted in severe legal restrictions against Catholics being carried well into the eighteenth century.⁷¹ Religious and political England (Act of Settlement, 1701) joined forces to prevent the return to England of the Antichrist, now seemingly banished after a long, difficult struggle.

Notes

¹Thomas Lancaster, The Ryght and Trew Understa[n]dyng of the Supper of the Lord and the Use Therof Faythfully Gathered Out of y^e Holy Scriptures Worthely to be Embrased of All Christen People (1550?) (University Microfilms, Reel 103, 1941), sig. E5^r.

²Lancaster, sig. A4^r.

³Lancaster, sig. D5^r.

⁴Lancaster, sig. D5^r, D6^v.

⁵Lancaster, sig. E2^r, E3^v.

⁶A Sovereigne Cordial for a Christian Conscience (1554), from Roan[n]e (University Microfilms, Reel 217, 1944), sig. B1^v.

⁷A Sovereigne Cordial, sig. A6^r.

⁸D. M. Loades, The Oxford Martyrs (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1970), p. 181.

⁹Loades, p. 182.

¹⁰A Sovereigne Cordial, sig. A7^r.

¹¹A Sovereigne Cordial, sig. A4^v.

¹²A Sovereigne Cordial, sig. A2^v.

¹³Laurence Saunders, "Letters of Maister Laurence Saunders, Parson of Allhollowes in Bredstrete in London," in Certain Most Godly, Fruitful, and Comfortable Letters of Such True Saintes and Holy Martyrs of God, as in the Late Bloodye Persecution Here Within This Realme, Gave Their Lives For the Defence of Christes Holy Gospel, ed. Miles Coverdale (London, 1564) (University Microfilms, Reel 217, 1944), p. 194.

¹⁴Robert Crowley, A Deliberate Answere Made to a Rash Offer, Which a Popish Antichristian Catholique Made to a Learned Protestant (as He Saieth) and Caused to be Published in Printe: Anno Do. 1575 (1587) (University Microfilms, Reel 213, 1944), title page.

¹⁵Crowley, A Deliberate Answere, sig. A2^r.

¹⁶Crowley, A Deliberate Answere, p. 25.

¹⁷Crowley, A Deliberate Answere, p. 53.

¹⁸Crowley, A Deliberate Answere, sig. A2^v.

¹⁹Crowley, A Deliberate Answere, p. 24^v.

²⁰Crowley, A Deliberate Answere, p. 33^v.

²¹Crowley, A Deliberate Answere, p. 38^v.

²²John Swan, trans., A Treatise Touching Anti-Christ by Lambert Danaeus (London, 1589) (University Microfilms, Reel 213, 1944), title page.

²³Swan, sig. A2^r, A3^v.

²⁴Swan, sig. A3^v.

²⁵Swan, title page.

²⁶Swan, sig. A4^r.

²⁷OED, "Jesuit."

²⁸Swan, sig. B2^v, B2^r.

²⁹Swan, p. 119.

³⁰Swan, p. 116.

³¹Swan, p. 117.

[The court of Rome doth aim at money; it sucks
dry thy purse and soaks up thy coffers;
If you wish to keep the gold in your coffers,
come not near Popes or patriarchs.
But if you frankly give them money, and with
good gold stuff up their coffers,
I warrant then you shall be free, from any kind
of penalty.
"Who's within?"
"Who's there?"
"I."
"Why, what would ye?"
"To come in."
"Bring you ought?"
"No."
"Stand still."
"But I do." (Second person at door speaking.)
"Come then in."]

³²Oliver Ormerod, The Picture of a Papist (1606)
(University Microfilms, Reel 968, 1963), sig. A2^r, A3^v.

³³Ormerod, title page.

³⁴Ormerod, title page.

³⁵Ormerod, p. 22.

³⁶Ormerod, pp. 182-267.

³⁷Ormerod, title page.

³⁸Ormerod, pp. 31, 32.

³⁹Ormerod, p. 135.

⁴⁰Ormerod, p. 178.

⁴¹Ormerod, p. 180.

⁴²Ormerod, p. 32.

⁴³Ormerod, p. 174.

- ⁴⁴Ormerod, p. 133.
- ⁴⁵Ormerod, p. 269.
- ⁴⁶Ormerod, title page.
- ⁴⁷Thomas Beard, Antichrist the Pope of Rome (1625) (University Microfilms, Reel 1126, 1968), p. 2.
- ⁴⁸Beard, p. 2.
- ⁴⁹Beard, p. 285.
- ⁵⁰Beard, p. 12.
- ⁵¹John Foxe, The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe, with a Life by George Townsend (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1965), II, 270.
- ⁵²Beard, p. 417.
- ⁵³Beard, p. 422:
Of old none got Saint Peters Keyes but such
Whose manly parts were proued by the touch.
Whence comes it then that now this tryall faire
Surceaseth by that famous bored chaire?
It is, because the Popes that now do sit,
Proue themselves men, by bastards which they get.
- ⁵⁴Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., III, 739.
- ⁵⁵Beard, p. 421.
- ⁵⁶Beard, p. 423.
- ⁵⁷Beard, p. 423.
- ⁵⁸Beard, p. 423.
- ⁵⁹Beard, p. 419.
- ⁶⁰Beard, p. 3^v.

⁶¹Beard, p. 3^r.

⁶²The Antichristian Principle Fully Discovered (London: N.P., 1679).

⁶³The Antichristian Principle, title page.

⁶⁴The Antichristian Principle, title page.

⁶⁵The Antichristian Principle, p. 1.

⁶⁶The Antichristian Principle, p. 33.

⁶⁷The Antichristian Principle, p. 36.

⁶⁸The Antichristian Principle, p. 33.

⁶⁹The Antichristian Principle, p. 39.

⁷⁰The Antichristian Principle, pp. 27, 28.

⁷¹Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XIX, 423.

SECTION FIVE

SECULAR WRITERS

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when events associated with religion involved the futures of kings and the safety of men's lives, the term "Antichrist" served an important theological purpose. It was used by Wyclif to point out the errors in accepted Church doctrine, by post-Wyclif writers to identify those who were violently oppressing them and to defend their own position, by John Bale as a crusader's banner expressive of every negative connotation he could gather to it, by Foxe to show the consequences of resisting the forces identified with the term, and by Beard to furnish a background for grave scholarly discussion. But by the end of the sixteenth century, after many problems attributed to Roman influence in England had been resolved, the term lost its relevance in the religious life of the country. Fewer theologians show interest, and many secular writers of the new century--Shakespeare, Herrick, Sidney, and Milton in his English poems--did not use the term. It does not appear as such in the sonnet sequences of Daniel and Drayton, or in Spenser's poetry, although some critics find allusions to

Antichrist in The Faerie Queen. Marlowe and Kyd refer to Rome almost incidentally, Marlowe coming closest in terminology and Kyd in attitude to the sixteenth century response to the Roman Church:

King Edward:
 Proud Rome, that hatchest such imperial
 grooms [the Archbishop of Canterbury],
 For these thy superstitious taper-lights,
 Where with thy antichristian churches
 blaze,
 I'll fire thy crazed buildings and
 enforce
 The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground.¹

Kyd, in writing a response to a verse composed by a young man (referred to as Tychborne) the night before his execution for his part in a plot on the life of Elizabeth, uses some familiar sounding phrases:

The Pope to prop his minions state,
 doth golden proffers make:
 Crowne, scepter, roiall marriage bed,
 to those his part that take.
 The traytrous crew late reapt reward,
 not fitting their desire:
 But, as their purpose bloody was,
 so shamefull was their hire.
 For chaire of state, a stage of shame,
 and crows for crownes they have:
 Their scepter to a halter changde,
 their bed become their grave.²

The remarks about the pope may sound like post-Wyclif statements, but they have very little to do with religion, being politically motivated remarks on the decline of the pope's influence in England. The sentiments expressed,

even for the soon-to-be-dead Tychborne, do not include religious thoughts.

One might think that John Donne (1573?-1631), writer on religious subjects as well as secular, might have considered Antichrist, but in his English poems, the only mention occurs in the "Elegie on Mrs. Boulstred":

O strong and long-lived death, how cam'st thou in?
And how without Creation didst begin?
Thou hast, and shalt see dead, before thou dyest,
All the foure Monarchies, and Antichrist.³

There is no reference to the pope here; the mention of Antichrist is only a passing one; the poem is about death. Donne alludes to the scope of human history in terms of the Fifth Monarchist, who believed the end of the world was to come after the Fifth monarchy, the time when Christ will reign on earth for a thousand years,⁴ after which Antichrist will appear; and only then will death die, says Donne.

The term did not disappear entirely from English literature in the seventeenth century. Here and there it occurs in purely imaginative works loosely connected with religion and oft-repeated ideas and phrases of the reformers, or sometimes in an entirely secular work as a comedic accent. The selections which follow present various modes and moods of secular works in which the "Antichrist" appears.

A Fabulist

When they transferred the Antichrist to works of the imagination, secular writers filtered the idea through their aesthetic vision and retained only what contributed to the main purpose of their creations. Here Begynneth the Byrthe and Lyfe of the Moost False and Deceytfull Antechryst (1550?) printed by Wynkyn de Worde⁵ gives an imaginary account of the origin of the Antichrist, attempting by a series of inversions or contrasts to establish the exact antithesis to Christ. The manuscript is regrettably incomplete, breaking off in chapter 2 and resuming at chapter 6.

The writer clearly defines his understanding of "Antecryste": "And Antecryste is as moche for to say in the Grekes language by interpretacyon as contrary unto Chryst."⁶ He goes on in chapter 1 to say that "Schalcus shall lye with his doughter Ulcas and shall engendre on her the chylde of perdycon that is Antichryst."⁷ The place of the subsequent birth of this child of incest is Babylon, that sinful city. The manner of the birth is as follows: the mother (Ulcas) shall fall to earth in childbirth with "a grete noyse and crye," after which Antichrist shall break out "at her bely unnaturally before all the people." Immediately, he "shall speke incontynent boldely and wysely dyuers languages as though he had ben

upon the erth longe and his vysage shall be chaungeable."⁸ The OED defines "changeable," the more usual form of "chaungeable," as "showing different colors under different aspects," like the shades seen when looking at a piece of velvet or satin; it also gives "variegated or parti-coloured." The "vysage" that "shall be chaungeable" refers to an idea repeated in literature that the devil in human form is revealed through the color of his face. Modern readers encounter the same idea in Hawthorne's "My Kinsman, Major Mollineux," when Robin, stopping a man on the street to ask for his uncle, observes:

One side of the face blazed an intense red, while the other was black as midnight, . . . and a mouth which seemed to extend from ear to ear was black or red, in contrast to the color of the cheek. The effect was as if two individual devils, a fiend of fire and a fiend of darkness, had united themselves to form this infernal visage. The stranger grinned in Robin's face, muffled his party-colored [sic] features, and was out of sight in a moment.⁹

In both works the abnormal countenance is indicative of evil supernatural beings.

Conditions antithetical to the birth of Christ accompany that of Antichrist: instead of taking place in the privacy of night, Antichrist's birth is a vulgar daytime spectacle; instead of angels to light up the night sky, smoke will darken the day; instead of the singing of

angels, the grunting of pigs will be heard. After Antichrist is born, Ulcas is to die,¹⁰ and Antichrist will eventually develop a character as unlike Christ's as possible.

The remaining chapters attribute many diabolical and supernatural traits to Antichrist: he will put many nations under his power;¹¹ he will preach in great pride,¹² causing amazement and admiration in the religious world of his day; he will do false miracles¹³ for his own aggrandizement rather than to help the poor and sick as Christ did; he will even raise people from the dead;¹⁴ his disciples shall speak in tongues;¹⁵ he will circumcise himself in the temple before assembled Jewish people, claiming to be their Messiah;¹⁶ he will rebuild the destroyed temple in three days with the help of demons;¹⁷ and after many other exploits, he will finally be defeated and thrown into hell.¹⁸ These activities of Antichrist differ little from those ascribed to him by the reformers, but never once does the author compare him to the pope or the Catholic Church. Though this work is not very likely the product of a reformer, it could have been useful to them after the connection between Antichrist and the pope had become automatic in some people's minds. Purely imaginary details enhance an already vigorous character.

The author's imaginative skills extend to his use of Scripture. In chapter 5 he quotes what he says is from

the book of Revelation: "For the deuyl [devil] shall occupy all his falshede thrughe Antechryste," although Antichrist is not mentioned in Revelation. In the same chapter he claims to quote from Ecclesiastes⁴ "Vide cūctos sub sole ambulantes cum addolescente secūdo" and translates it as "I have seen two bachelers or joueneeles [juveniles] walkynge under the sonne."¹⁹ The words more literally yield, "I saw all under the sun walking with the second adolescent." However his Latin quotation does not agree with the same reference in the Latin Vulgate where the verse appears as follows: "Vide cūctos uiuētes' qui ambulāt sub sole cū adolecente secūdo: qui cōsurget p[ro] eo."²⁰ After giving and translating the Latin text, he explains it:

The fyrst hath been good and is the sone
of god our souerayne sauour Jhesu
chryste. The seconde that be growynge
in voluptuosyte and in all unhappyness[,]
that shall be Antechryst.²¹

Since Ecclesiastes does not contain the word "Antichrist," nor does it concern itself with end times in any direct way, the reference is unfounded. The author used Scripture in much the same imaginative way as did some of the reformers.

Translator, W. P.

The firm belief that the Roman Church was Antichrist is clearly expressed in the translation Pasquine in a

Traunce (1556?),²² a light, imaginative, treatment of this continuing allegation. The title page promises that, along with "pleasaunt hystories" of trips to the worlds beyond--Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory--discoveries of "all the crafty conueyances of Antechrist" will be made. Familiar characterizations of Antichrist are given: "What, knowest not thou, that Antichrist with his monstrous myracles, must put the world in confusion?"²³ The repeated charge that the pope is a usurper recurs:

That is the temple of Antichrist . . .
For what thing can be more against Christ,
than to drive Christ out of his temple,
and to put other in his place. . . .
Antichrist is so called by this effect,
bycause he is against Christ.²⁴

Pasquine says the name under which Antichrist goes so he can "sel him selfe to the worlde" is "PAPA," the pope.²⁵

At the end of the work, W. P.²⁶ lists "Questions of Pasquine to be disputed in the Councell Nowe holden at Trent [1545-1563]," three of which concern Antichrist and the pope:

Whether the Pope be the man of sinne, the
sonne of perdition;

Whether the Pope be that great whore;

Whether the Pope being Antechrist, may be
Christes Vicare.²⁷

In the body of the work, though the author makes occasional reference to Antichrist, he concentrates more on his pleasant histories. The events recounted are set in Italy when Paul III (1534-1549) was pope. Translated twenty-five years later, the reader senses the implication by the translator in his introductory material that if Italians found fault with the pope and the Catholic religion, it is certainly forgivable for Englishmen to do so. Some of the arguments and the language sound as though the translator contributed quite a few of his own anti-Roman ideas. That the original work was really from Italy is entirely believable, for names of saints and martyrs not found in English works occur, and the Reformation is referred to as a wind from the North.

In "To the Reader," the bitter invectives against the Roman Church rival those of Bale:

. . . the whole pack of the Popes pedlary
wares . . . the Romish Apot[h]icaries
[who] have so conserued, confected, and
couloured, with the drugges & other the
fine deuises of their subtile Sophistrie,
all their whole pelfe and trumperie,
[such] as meritorious Masses, fayned
miracles, superstitious obseruances,
hypocriticall fastings, paynted holynesse,
and Sodomiticall chastitie, and that with
their chauntings, pypings, gaye glistering
shews and sightes, sweete smells.²⁸

The phrases "counterfeit religion," "smoth smiered shaue-
lings" [smooth, smeared shavelings],²⁹ "fatbellyed monks

& lying Fryers," "false allegations of the Scriptures," and "wyvelesse but not womanless chastite"³⁰ are very similar to phrases used by Wyclif and Bale. The author refers to the death of the Protestant martyrs, giving what he sees as the real reason for their suffering:

But one thing (gentle Reader) thou wilt not a little maruell at, that their spirituall weapons, wherewith they defend their Romish Kingdome, (I meane their owne counsels, and constitutions herein alleaged) are so brought against themselves, and so retourned home to their owne confusion, and ouerthrowe, that there remayneth now no more spirituall defence, or resistance, but that they lay hande on the Temporall sworde, and vse the violent arguments of fyre, swords and halter, which howe muche they haue done, in this Realme of late days, that very Rome itself hath abhorred.³¹

The work itself is in the form of a dialogue between Pasquine, "that aunçiēt Romaine," and Marforius, who claims to have studied canon law. Actually, they are both statues traditionally used as speaking characters in satires. The name "Pasquine" refers to:

. . . the Roman cobbler of the latter half of the 15th century, whose shop stood in the neighbourhood of the Braschi palace near the Piazza Navoni. He was noted for his caustic remarks and bitter sayings. After his death, a mutilated statue near the shop was called by his name, and made the repository of all the bitter epigrams and satirical verses of the city.³²

The same handbook says of Marforius:

This statue lies on the ground in Rome,
and was at one time used for libels,
lampoons, and jests, but was never so
much used as Pasquin's.

Though the work mentions that Pasquine is a statue, the satirical effect is much enhanced by knowing that Marforius is also a statue, making them both impervious to retribution which the Church might wish to administer to two such flippant critics. Conversations between statues to express dangerous ideas appear to have been popular with several writers of the period.

Marforius alludes to Pasquine's solid state, saying, "How can you, of stone, get up to Heaven?" Pasquine, using the question to make a point, answers:

Is it not a greater maruell, that some
of these lubberlye greasie Fryers,
Parsons, Bishoppes, Abbots and other
foule gorbellied fathers, shoulde get
up thither, which are so heauey that
Elephantes are scarce able to carye
them?³³

The author proposes to write for both pleasure and profit, and immediately the reader is aware that this is not simply a secularization of a theological work. Pasquine says he entered the trance which opened to him the secrets of the spiritual world by a very devilish-sounding conjuration.³⁴ First he visited Purgatory, which he calls "the Popes heaven," a large building erected on the trappings of Catholicism:

. . . hoodes, beades, nonnes vales,
 . . . Byshops Myters, triple crownes,
 Hattes redde and greene, Pardons,
 Candels. . . .³⁵

As he looks closely he sees Luther, Zwingli, and other reformers digging tunnels through the foundation, further weakening it. He never explains why these men should appear in this place after they declare it to be nonexistent. He makes puns on the names of the orders, many of whose members he finds in Purgatory:

. . . the Augustians, or Augustinians,
 Carnalitanes or Carmelitanes, Demonicanes or Dominicanes, Fraudiscanes or Franciscanes. . . .³⁶

As if protecting a friend's good name, he vigorously denies that St. Augustine instituted an order of monks.³⁷ He talks about the fire to be found in Purgatory, saying it was used variously

. . . the more to feare [frighten]
 the mindes of the poore simple people,
 and chiefly such as be sicke of the
 Feuer [fever], who feeling the heate
 of the Feuer, have thought that that
 heate of Purgatory is ten tymes greater[;]
 or else bycause those people that are
 towarde the North, are very colde, to
 the end they should not so goe frozen
 to God, it was meete that they should
 first be heate[d] a little.³⁸

Discussing the denial of marriage to priests, Marforius replies to Pasquine's discussion of Biblical

chastity: "Why then Origen much mistooke this matter, in cutting away his instrumēt of generation."³⁹ This reference to self-mutilation is reminiscent of discussions of flagellation in Robert Crowley's writings to his recusant godson.⁴⁰ The concept of punishing or benefiting the soul by abusing the body is prevalent in religious practices; circumcision is the best known of these, originating in Judaism." The imposition by Catholic priests of physical penance on sinners and acts of flagellation on themselves is widely documented. The English clergy who sentenced the martyrs to death seemed to believe that threats of death might produce recantations. Perhaps to the English people this rationale justified religious murder from 1401 to 1676, when Charles II removed the government's right to execute persons for religious reasons.⁴¹

Pasquine does not allow the discussion to progress to martyrdom at this point and soon declares that Italy and Spain send the fewest women to Purgatory.⁴² His racy stories of wickedness carried out in Purgatory by some inhabitants appeal to more than one level of taste and include actions not meant to be imitated by the reader. These tales are temporary diversions; soon he returns to his derogation of the Catholic Church with three familiar anti-Catholic topics: wicked deeds of individual cardinals and popes are described, the disgrace of a woman pope is

mentioned, and the murder of unwanted children by erring nuns is deplored.

Pasquine places anyone attempting to take a neutral position between Protestantism and Romanism somewhere between God's and the pope's Heavens, oscillating endlessly from an upright to an upside-down position. Erasmus suffered this fate,⁴³ as did preachers fearful of telling the truth as they knew it. Pasquine had little sympathy for those lacking the physical courage to speak out against misused religious power.

Passing from Purgatory to Heaven, Pasquine continues to focus mainly on the abuses that he says will keep the pope and his hierarchy out. He speaks so eloquently that Marforius wishes Pasquine were pope.⁴⁴ Pasquine's answer reveals an understanding that could be interpreted as reluctant sympathy for the plight of the pope:

Thou wishest me a very good turn, Marforius, in that thou wouldest have me become Antichrist. If I were Pope I shoulde be even as the rest were, for the Papacye would make me to be as it is, and I should not make it be as I say.⁴⁵

Pasquine's visit to Hell prompts him to make an observation about living in the last times, though he does not express the thought directly. Instead, describing the gate of Hell covered with the coats of arms and the names of each pope, he says that only a few vacant spaces remain

and that Pope Paul III was expected soon⁴⁶ to add his emblems to the gate. Pasquine tries to relieve Marforius' mind about the great number of persons in Hell because of these same popes, saying that not so many had entered since the pope had been discovered to be Antichrist; grass, he says, is growing in the "broad way."⁴⁷

This light, entertaining consideration of questions frequently presented grimly and vindictively exhibits the freer exercise of the imagination which was one of the outgrowths as well as a cause of the Renaissance. The author's humor makes the defense of his position more acceptable and memorable, if less accurate and just as prejudiced, than the defense of more caustic critics.

Sir John Harington

The work of Sir John Harington (1561-1612) typifies the passing interest afforded the idea of Antichrist in a time when secular concerns began to replace theological priorities for many people. Harington's essay on the coming of Elias (Elijah) before the Day of Judgment based on chapter 11 of Revelation, "that hygh and mistycall book," presents ideas much like the familiar theological treatise, but he takes care to put responsibility for the ideas on historical authorities:

. . . I may say on other mens credyt,
that St. Hillary, Orygen, Chrisostome,
Hierom and all that expownd St. Mathew's
Gospell, vnderstand, and beleeeue, and
teach, that Elyas himself shall come.⁴⁸

. . . that both Elyas and Enoke are yet
lyving is the opinion of Irenus, Tertull-
yan, Ierom, and Epiphanius.

And the reason, that some wryters
alleadge for theyr soch opinion, is this,
That it is most probable that these two
are so longe and so myraculowsly preserved
in the fleshe, to doe some soch worthy
exployt as to confownd the great Antichrist,
the man of sinne; to cunvert the Iews. . . .⁴⁹

But now, for a full conclusion of this
question, . . . I will finish this discowrse
with St. Awgustines own words, owt of two
his best and best allowd treetysses. . . .⁵⁰

He evidently wrote the essay on Elijah as a young man
before he had acquired the confidence to express his
opinions in the vacillating world around him:

. . . it wear [were] half ridyculows for
me to be curyous or copyous in cyting
theyr awtorytie [authority] whom skarce
my yeers and moch less my professyon haue
giuen mee leysure to read. . . .⁵¹

In later writings devoid of the seriousness that marks
his essay on Elijah, he adjusts his religious loyalties
to suit the fashion. When asked on one occasion of what
religion he was, he claimed, "I am a protesting Catholicke
Puritan," not fearing to give such a flippant answer,
because he knew his questioners were "but Protestants of
anno primo Elizabeth"--Protestants only since the first

year of Elizabeth's reign, having been staunch Catholics in Mary's preceding reign.⁵²

His secular attitude may best be seen in the following poem:

Of Two Religions

One by his father kept long time to schoole,
 And proving not vnlearned nor a foole,
 Was earst [then] by him demaunded one occasion
 Which was the sounder Church in his perswasion,
 If this church of Geneva late reformed,
 Or that old Catholick that theis [these] have
 skorned.
 Both do cyte doctors, Councells both alleadge,
 Both bost [boast] the word[,] truths everlasting
 pleadge.
 "Then say, my sonn," quoth he, "Fear no controule.
 Which of the two is safest for my soule?"
 "Sure," quoth the sonn, "a man had needs be crafty
 To keepe his soule and body both in safty.
 But both to save, this is best way to houlde:
 Live in the new, dy yf you can in th' olde."⁵³

Though Antichrist is not mentioned in this poem, it shows the dilemma felt by many ordinary people unable to understand the theological arguments involved as archbishops and kings changed from Catholic to Protestant loyalties. The effort to keep in line with the prevailing religion was not without danger even yet; a man needed to be "crafty." The solution required educated consideration: both sides quoted learned doctors to support their claims, both cited authoritative statements from grave deliberative councils, and both claimed to be speaking truth, although many allegations were contradictory. The son suggests a

practical solution to his father's query; years later Charles II actually arranged his living and dying along these lines. Though the growing popularity of the Protestant religion made life easier for Protestants than for Catholics, some Englishmen were not yet ready to trust their souls to the new "Church of Geneva late reformed," wishing to go into the next life with the blessing of the Roman Church. Though he shows awareness of Antichrist's role in theological discourses, Harington is primarily concerned with espousing whatever religion allowed him to live in safety.

Ben Jonson

An early seventeenth century writer whose work illustrates the lessening seriousness of Antichrist as a topic is Ben Jonson (1573-1637), born into a family caught up in the tension between Catholic and Anglican. Jonson's father accepted the reformed doctrine under Edward, suffered for his beliefs and lost his property under Mary, and took Anglican orders under Elizabeth, becoming a "grave minister of the gospel."⁵⁴ Except for the loss of his inheritance, these events would have affected Jonson only through hearsay, since his father died the month before he was born. He grew up a Protestant but became a Catholic in October, 1598, while jailed for Gabriel Spencer's murder.⁵⁵ Evidently, his Catholicism was of such a nature

that, even in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot, he was not suspected: "It is clear that he felt in the matter altogether as a subject and an Englishman, not as a Catholic."⁵⁶ His enthusiastic return to Protestantism after twelve years is related in Drummond's "Conversations":

After he was reconciled with the Church and left of[f] to be a recusant, at his first communion in token of true Reconciliation, he drank out all the full cup of wyne.⁵⁷

Drummond says Jonson was "for any religion as being versed in both,"⁵⁸ making it likely that the references to Antichrist in his work carry little, if any, religious partisanship. His interest in the term may have arisen from lingering Catholic sympathies at the time of the writing or from his understanding of the devious motives behind the construction and purpose of the concept; and his unique comic treatment served to mitigate the sting of the epithet in some measure.

The references to Antichrist in Jonson's play The Alchemist⁵⁹ furnish comedy at the expense of recent fanatical religious sects and carry no serious theological implications. The character most concerned with Antichrist in the play is Ananias, one of the "holy Brethren of Amstredam [Amsterdam], the exil'd Saints," dissenters who had left England to live in the Netherlands. Their particular denomination is not named, but their association with

the Anabaptists is indicated when one character calls them "little Jon Leydens," referring to the infamous Anabaptist leader, John of Leyden, known also as Johann Bockholdt, husband to several wives, one of whom he beheaded in a fit of frenzy. Before he came to religious prominence, John was a botcher, or tailor,⁶⁰ as is Ananias. Also like John, Ananias' disdain for the law allows him to arrive at certain conclusions and justify them with perverse reasoning: he is not subject to English law because, as a Puritan he does not recognize civil authority (l. 1646); and he may legally counterfeit "forraine coyne" in England because England has no law against manufacturing Dutch currency (l. 1647).

As a Dissenter, Ananias offers self-righteous opinions different than those of both Catholic and Protestant. His disparaging remarks about Antichrist were therefore no great threat to English Catholics and not much help to English Protestants in the time Jonson was writing. He uses both the Puritan and Antichrist to produce humor rather than to take sides in a religious-political struggle. If the term "Antichrist" still produced some defensive reaction in the Roman Church by recalling recent controversy, Jonson's treatment may have lessened the tension by daring to take lightly what concerned persons took so seriously.

Jonson uses Ananias to illustrate the inconsistencies and the illogicalities of the attack by religious extremists on the Roman Church. From the very first, Ananias appears as a disruptive influence, antagonizing Subtle in the first scene. Subtle promptly states his unwillingness to deal with Ananias, after which Ananias appears mostly as a dupe, unnecessary to the multiple intrigues carried on by other characters. From time to time, he viciously attacks someone by calling him "Antichrist," the most derogatory name he can think of. As a deplorable representative of religion, Ananias possesses morality dependent on titles and assumptions but lacking entirely in deeds. His objections to the Roman Church concern words and appearances. At the risk of jeopardizing the all-important completion of the philosopher's stone which he thinks will get rid of "the Bishops,/ Or the Antichristian Hierarchie" (ll. 1338-1339), he cannot resist amending Subtle's "Christ-masse" to "Christ-tide" (l. 1539), and he declares that he hates "Tradition . . . They are Popish, all" (ll. 1602-1603). When he sees Surly dressed up as a Spanish nobleman arguing with Kastrill, Ananias makes moral judgments based solely on the fashion; when Subtle and Surly argue over Surly's Spanish slops (baggy breeches), Ananias irritably remarks, "They are profane,/ Leud, superstitious, and idolatrous Breeches" (ll. 2678-2679). After a slightly longer observation of Surly's outfit, Ananias

says, "Thou look'st like Antichrist, in that leud hat"
 (l. 2686) ". . . Depart, proud Spanish Fiend" (l. 2688)
 ". . . Child of Perdition" (l. 2689).

Ananias' dialogue is permeated with the language of the Revelation and other Biblical or religious terms: "the Elect," "Satan," "the beautiful light," "peace," ". . . zeal hath offended," to state just a few. As Subtle intimates, the names of the brethren reflect the Puritan religious influence: Tribulation, Persecution, Restraint, Long-Patience, and others. Characters speaking to Ananias sometimes use the same type of language. When Ananias first appears in the play, before he says a word, Subtle, knowing that Ananias is a prospective customer for his philosopher's stone, pretends to be hard at work with a chemical reaction, and in ostentatiously rejecting a chemical residue, says, "Terra damnata/ Must not have entrance, in the worke" (ll. 1261-1262). Later in the same scene, Subtle says, "Send your Elders,/ Hither, to make atonement for you, quickly" (ll. 1332-1333). Yet for all his surface religiosity, Ananias' deeds and attitudes are usually un-Christian. As mentioned, he is eager to counterfeit coins, an illegal activity. He is also willing to cheat out of their estates orphans whose dead parents had not been proved "sincere professors." His attitude toward Kastril, Surly, and Love-wit is critical and loveless. At the end of the play, when Love-Wit

refuses to let Ananias haul off the utensils which were to be turned into gold, Ananias responds:

. . . I will pray there [Amsterdam]
Against thy House: May Dogges defile thy walles,
And Waspes and Hornets breed beneath thy roofs,
This seat of falsehood, and this cave of cos'nage.
(11. 3224-3270)

Ananias is not stupid. The initial disagreement between Subtle and Ananias stems partly, if not mainly, from Subtle's realization that Ananias might not so easily be fooled. After revealing a ruthless attitude toward the orphans' estates, Ananias faces Subtle with an itemized list from the Brethren of the materials already consumed by Subtle's unsuccessful experiments:

. . . Yo'have had,
For th'Instruments, as bricks and lome and glasses,
Already thirty pound; and, for Materials,
They say, some ninety more: And, they have
heard, since,
That one, at Heidelberg, made it [the philoso-
pher's stone] of an Egge
And a small paper of Pinne-dust.
(11. 1322-1327)

Evidently, Ananias asks for explanations which Subtle does not want to give and for which no one else in the play thinks to ask. Subtle also must beware the possibility that the dour Ananias might out-cozen him.

But Ananias is not logical. If an explanation appeals to his prejudices, he accepts it on that basis alone. In a series of arguments wholly lost on Ananias,

Tribulation Wholesome, pastor of the dissenting flock, tries to ameliorate Ananias' hostility toward Subtle. Ananias irrelevantly replies that Subtle "beares/ The visible marke of the beast, in his forehead" (ll. 1452-1453). The mark of the beast, or the number 666, is not remarked on by any other character, so the accusation is an inappropriate response to Tribulation's efforts at mediation. In a further placatory attempt, the pastor tries to give Ananias an understanding of Subtle's weaknesses, excusing some of them because Subtle's work as a chemist places him in an environment similar to that in which Satan works--close to the fire, inhaling chemical fumes from brimstone and arsenic. After all, asks Tribulation, who is more antichristian than men such as bell-founders and cooks whose work exposes them to great heat all day? Allowing for man's weak nature, such working conditions amount to extenuating circumstances. Appealing directly to Ananias' evangelistic zeal, Tribulation postulates that, after the stone is delivered to the Brethren, Subtle may be persuaded to do a spiritual about-face and become a zealous warrior "against the menstrous cloth, and ragg of Rome" (l. 1478). Ananias is rendered tolerant, if not penitent, by these arguments, which have nothing to do with actualities.

In Ananias, Jonson describes the qualities of the religious bigotry around him: humorless, hypocritical,

cunningly intelligent, illogical, and forbidding. While he makes his audience laugh, Jonson conveys a powerful statement on the posturing that passed, in the eyes of some, for Christianity.

The Genealogist

Jonson's references to Antichrist required no theological support to produce the desired effect. The genealogy--"A True and Plaine Genealogy or Pedigree of Antichrist, Wherein is Cleerly Discovered that Hee is Lineally Descended From the Divell"--composed about 1634 by an unidentified writer also produced its prejudicial effect without theological support; in fact, the genealogy rises completely out of the imagination of its writer. The characters' names sound like those found in late medieval morality plays. The tone is self-righteous, somewhat grand, and a bit mysterious at the end. Any humor present is heavy and sardonic as befitting what appears to be an attempt at an abbreviated epic:

- 1 Who so thou art that dost desire to know,
- 2 The stock whereof proud Antichrist did grow,
- 3 Whom JESUS CHRIST did long before fore-tell,
- 4 Should in the Church against the Church rebell,
- 5 Making her mourne with pittifull complaints,
- 6 And being drunken with blood of her Saints,
- 7 Should tyrannizing over her remayne,
- 8 Untill his pride be deeply dide in graine;
- 9 And then both he and's Kingdome down should
fall
- 10 Without redresse or any helpe at all:

11 Whose comming should not be with claps of
 Thunders,
 12 But signes and miracles and lying wonders.
 13 My rusticke Muse declares his very name,
 14 His pedigree, and of what house he came.
 15 There was a brave heroicke Gentleman,
 16 As ancient as since the world began,
 17 Whose industry and policy was such,
 18 That all the world besides had not so much;
 19 His Engines, Stratagems, and feats of Warre,
 20 Made his dominions to extend as farre
 21 As Alexanders, that's surnam'd the Great;
 22 Such was his prowess by the Martiall feats,
 23 Conquering his trade, Apollyon his name,
 24 Of that grand worthy, this great worthy came,
 25 One deadly-Darkness was his eldest sonne;
 26 And thus (in truth) this royall race begun.
 27 And then that Darkness did beget by chance,
 28 A son, an heire, and cald him Ignorance;
 29 Of his true byrth ther's no man need enquire,
 30 You see the sonne is fully like the Sire.
 31 This Ignorance lived a while, and then
 32 He begot Error and his bretheren,
 33 Error begot Freewill and Selfe-conceit,
 34 Freewill got Merit, that deceiving bait,
 35 Merit begot Forgetfullnesse of Grace;
 36 And then his sonne Trangression [sic] tooke his
 place:
 37 And that Trangression did beget Distrust,
 38 Who deeming God lesse mercifull than Just
 39 Maugre his justice to maintaine his action,
 40 Begot a sonne and call'd him Satisfaction.
 41 This Satisfaction, e're his father dide,
 42 Being excessively possest with pride,
 43 Rejected quite Christs bloody sacrifice,
 44 Which once for all he offered in such wise
 45 That he for all his peoples sinnes thereby,
 46 Did Gods pure justice fully satisfie.
 47 The cause why Satisfaction did this thing,
 48 Was, that thereby he might to credit bring
 49 His onely sonne, the Sacrifice o'th' Masse,
 50 As proud a Knave as e're his father was:
 51 For if to him come any one or other,
 52 Desiring helpe for some deceased brother:
 53 Upon condition of a golden fee,
 54 Hee'l contradict the mighty Gods decree,
 55 And disannull his judgements past also,
 56 And bring to weale whom God hath plac'd in woe,
 57 For if you'll trust him, this man doth excell,
 58 Hee'l hunt the place where all the Furies dwell,

59 And search the Lymboes: nay, hee'l not be sory
 60 To search throughout the furious Purgatory,
 61 And every nooke and secret corner there,
 62 Bee't in the Fier, Water, Earth or Aire,
 63 (For though that he hath fetched thousands
 thence,
 64 And did withall their deadly sinnes dispence,
 65 Has quite forgot, his wits are so decay'd,
 66 Whereof, wherein, and when that place was made,)
 67 But having found him, then he will surpasse,
 68 And bring the man from where he never was,
 69 Unto a place of myrth and melody:
 70 Where, if he were not, he can never be.
 71 The Priests annoynting his successor was,
 72 And Superstition thereon came to passe.
 73 This Superstition was a royall thing,
 74 For he begot Hypocrisie the King,
 75 Hypocrisie got Gaine by offering,
 76 And of that Gaine did Purgatory spring,
 77 Then Purgatory passing reasons bounder,
 78 Was certainly, Anniversaries founder:
 79 He by a stranger without Matrimony,
 80 Did then beget the Churches Patrimony.
 81 Then Mammon, of Iniquity his sonne,
 82 Begot a child, as his Father had done:
 83 A worthy sparke, Abundance was his name,
 84 And of Abundance, Ease, (a gallant) came.
 85 Ease begot Cruelty, and he Dominion;
 86 Dominion, Pompe; and Pompe, Ambition:
 87 And of this man old Simony did grow,
 88 A bribing Knave, how cleere soever he show,
 89 This man of issue was not without hope,
 90 For why? he liv'd to see his sonne the Pope;
 91 Who in this world doth beare a great renowne,
 92 And on his head doth weare a triple Crowne,
 93 Whose charity if it were to his power,
 94 He could clense Purgatory in an hower;
 95 And send the soules that in that place do
 dwell,
 96 Straight up to Heaven from that smoky Cell.
 97 He thinkes perhaps his power hereon is grounded
 98 The former place his predecessors founded:
 99 And for the latter none can him withstand,
 100 He beares the Keyes of heaven in his hand.
 101 But here's a grieve that to a mischief grew,
 102 Because his Holiness let in so few,
 103 Or else just none, which is a grievous thing,
 104 His keyes have lost theyr use of opening.
 105 And as the Keyes oth' Pharisees his brothers
 106 Shut heavens gate against themselves and others,

107 So he by his doth now nought else but shut
 108 That gate gainst all that in him credit put;
 109 And yet he vaunts himselfe to be Christs Vicar,
 110 I wonder much his wit should be no quicker,
 111 For Vicars have not (that were too too bad)
 112 A greater power then [sic] e're theyr Parsons
 had:
 113 Now Christ his Parson, openly did show
 114 His kingdome was not of this world below.
 115 But Pope his Vicar commands all estates,
 116 Kings, Emperors, and greatest Potentates,
 117 And turnes his power to furious tyranny,
 118 Against that Christ and all his complany:
 119 And by his rage they now abide affliction,
 120 He's Antichrist without all contradiction.
 121 Thus TRVETH (A GEM) hath here discovered that
 122 Which many a man hath long time wondered at:
 123 If thou aright these Roman letters frame:
 124 Inquire no more, thou hast the Authors name.⁶¹

As befits an epic hero, the beginning of this family line goes back to a remarkable person who is characterized as a very early world conqueror:

15 There was a brave heroicke Gentleman,
 16 As ancient as since the world began,
 17 Whose industry and policy was such,
 18 That all the world besides had not so much;
 19 His Engines, Stratagems, and feates of Warre,
 20 Made his dominions to extend as farre
 21 As Alexanders, that's sirnam'd the Great . . .

Alexander's name is italicized, as are the names of all the genealogy members. In this way, while not actually introducing Alexander into the line, the writer subtly transfers Alexander's personal characteristics and renown to this family tree by a typographical implication. An attempt at creating a touch of snob appeal is suggested by the chronological placement of the originator of this

line prior to the time of any other world conqueror, making the earlier hero the prototype, and Alexander the best known and most highly regarded imitator.

The name given to this first ancestor is Apollyon, taken from Revelation 9.11. In its single Scriptural occurrence, the name is that of a "king . . . who is the angel of the bottomless pit, the place of the wicked dead." In using this name, the poet exhibits the ease and assurance with which some Renaissance writers (for example, John Bunyan [1628-1688], who also used this name in Pilgrim's Progress for one of Christian's adversaries) sometimes mixed physical and spiritual qualities, or concrete and abstract ideas, as though either member of the pair could be fitted into the same rules and principles as the other, or as if either member could be substituted for the other. In addition to a spiritual realm, the poet gives Apollyon an earthly kingdom circumscribed by geographical boundaries determined by conquest. Apollyon himself becomes at least partly human; he is called a "gentleman," who lived at a certain time in the historic past, and who has human qualities of industry and skill in the conduct of public and military affairs.

Other human qualities are implied for Apollyon by placing him in a genealogy: he generates at least one son, if not more (Darkness was his eldest son), and becomes the founder of a race, each member of which is also a

mixture of abstraction and concreteness. In an allegorical manner, each "descendant" is an abstract concept with human qualities. In some instances, the personification lies only in the generation of a son; in others, it is more extensive. Some of the ideas in the poem are familiar to readers of epics--a worthy, half-supernatural ancestor who furnishes material for primitive heroic legends (the greatness of Apollyon and the extent and success of his wars); knowledge of and concern with the questions of right and wrong; free-will (rejection of Christ's sacrifice, l. 43); contradiction or defiance of the Supreme Being (l. 54); and the restraining influences of social institutions (religion and marriage, l. 79).

The last descendant--Simony's son, the Pope--continues the allegory. No specific pope is indicated, and much of what is said about the pope refers to the office itself: the triple crown, the title "Christ's Vicar," possession of the keys to Heaven. The lines (115-119) about the pope afflicting Christ and all his company are not as limiting in time as it first appears; Renaissance literature often claims that the Catholic Church, at the pope's direction, persecuted true believers as early as the twelfth century.⁶² Because the papacy has been continuous for the most part since the days of Peter, the poem was applicable to any pope ruling the Church when persecution of Protestant or Catholic dissenters took place.

On the surface the poem is an invention allowing the writer to present his belief that the office of the papacy was filled by Antichrist. It is difficult, however, to imagine the audience for whom he wrote. Some of the members of the genealogy are distinctively Catholic--Purgatory, Sacrifice o'th' Mass, the pope; but many of them were found in the Anglican clergy and in the court as well--for example, Ambition, Pompe, Ease. The poet depended on the readers' willingness to ascribe the mentioned qualities only to the Roman Church hierarchy. He stresses anti-Catholic views frequently attached to discussions of familiar theological points: Christ's prediction about false Christs to come, references to the woman drunk with the blood of saints (Rev. 17), the wonders and miracles done by the second beast (Rev. 13), and Christ's substitutional death. But the theology is fragmentary as well as secondary to his primary construction, the genealogy.

The poet includes ideas common in fifteenth and sixteenth century works--that the pope condoned or even ordered persecution of true believers, that the pope enjoyed great worldly power contrary to Christ's example, and that the pope claimed ultimate spiritual power over the destiny of the souls of men. Purgatory, a frequent topic of difference, is criticized as both a member of the genealogy (l. 76) and as the place (ll. 60-68; 94-98) for souls not yet worthy of final bliss. The same four

elements which compose Earth make up Purgatory--fire, water, earth, and air, fire receiving first mention because of its prominence in that place. The lines pertaining to Sacrifice o'th' Mass reiterate the basic conflict as to whether the Communion sacrament was redemptive or symbolic. Although the work is imaginative, it is so mainly in form and organization rather than in content.

The poem comprises sixty-two couplets in iambic pentameter, of which only four lines (31, 32, 78, 82) seem to be rough. A few couplets do not rhyme in the language of today (for example, "was" and "Masse"), but they may have done so when the poem was written. Instead of the usual appeal to the poetic muse at the beginning, the reader is addressed directly, the muse receiving only a passing mention (l. 13). The stated purpose (ll. 1, 2, 13) is worked out in the body and arrives at a conclusion, producing an impression of unity in the work. Tacked on the end is a cryptic four-line closing which purports to give clues to the author's name: ". . . these Roman letters . . ." (l. 123) include "R," "V," "E," "T," "H," and "M," and are perhaps an anagram. No solution is apparent; if the "M" were "T," the word "TRUETH" would be a possible solution. As the letters stand, "MURTHE" is possible, but provides no clue for identifying the author. Taking each letter as the beginning of a word in a sentence presents numerous possibilities, none

definite. For whatever reason, the author has successfully maintained his anonymity to this day.

John Cleveland

By the seventeenth century, the picture of religion in England was complicated by the increasing influence of the Puritans, theological offspring of the Lollards, who did not agree with the state religion much more than they agreed with Rome. In the poem about Sir Roger, the oath in question was formulated in 1640 by Convocation (the simultaneous gathering of the Anglican clergy with Parliamentary sessions) and was to be taken by all clergy to show their support of "the doctrine, discipline, and government" of the state church. This requirement caused deep resentment among the Puritans, even though the oath emphasized aversion to "Popish" doctrine. The particular phrase which drew their displeasure was the definition of church government as the roles carried out "by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, &c." This "&c.," or et cetera, left too much leeway to suit the Puritans.⁶³ John Cleveland (1613-1658), a Royalist poet known for his satires, wrote a poem about the reaction of two "zealots," as he termed the Puritans, to this et cetera. The poem shows how the term "Antichrist" began to be injected into seventeenth century quarrels against

groups or people other than the Roman Church or the pope:

Sir Roger . . .

Encountering with a brother of the cloth,
 Fell presently to cudgels with the Oath.
 The quarrel was a strange misshapen monster,
 &c., (God bless us) which they conster [construe]
 The brand upon the buttock of the Beast,
 The Dragon's tail tied in a knot, a nest
 of Young Apocryphas, the fashion
 Of a new mental Reservation,
 While Roger thus divides the text, the other
 Winks and expounds, saying, 'My pious brother,
 Harken with reverence, for the point is nice.
 I never read on 't, but I fasted twice.
 And so by revelation know it better
 Than all the learn'd idolaters o'th' letter.'
 With that he swelled, and fell upon the theme
 Like great Goliath with his weaver's beam.
 'I say to thee, &c., thou li'st!
 Thou art the curled lock of Antichrist;
 Rubbish of Babel; for who will not say
 Tongues were confounded in &c.?
 Who swears &c., swears more oaths at once
 Than Cerberus out of his triple sconce.
 Who views it well, with the same eye beholds
 The old half Serpent in his numerous folds. . . .⁶⁴

The poem does not seek to pleasantly entertain as did Pasquine, and it is not written against a specific injustice as was Monk John's poem. This poem's object is the Oath of Allegiance (1640), and Antichrist is just one item in an extensive list of deprecatory metaphors assembled by the poet for the infuriating "&c." The metaphors refer to various sections of the Scriptures: the Serpent and Babel from Genesis, Goliath from 1 Samuel 17, and the Beast and the Dragon from Revelation. The allusions to Revelation are reinforced by mention of the word "revelation." "Apocryphas" remind the reader of spurious Scriptures.

Some of these metaphors give visual dimension to the "&c."; it is said to be like a cattle brand, a knotted tail, a nest of unsanctioned or unholy apocryphal creatures, and a curl on an embodiment of Antichrist, probably the pope. The "misshapen monster" and "Cerberus" are classical allusions to ugliness and abnormality. In addition, the Puritans are pictured as unlearned people relying on revelation for guidance rather than on the written word. In a poem made up of negativity, the name "Antichrist" is used as an accent--perhaps the most acute one, but nothing more.

Cleveland's passing mention of Antichrist typifies the incidental secular use of the term during this period. Few theological writers were still thoughtfully considering Antichrist this late into the seventeenth century. The seriousness of the term and the problems with which it had been connected had been largely defused and diluted in England at least for the periods of time when it seemed that the influence of the Catholic Church had been largely suppressed. Yet another writer renewed interest in the term early in the seventeenth century, thus extending its life. Though he regarded the political ramifications of the concept most important, he drew heavily on its religious aspects and, because of his position, gave the term a respectability it had never had.

King James I

King James I of England incorporated the question of Antichrist into his battle against continental opponents who argued that it was as anomalous for a king to dominate a church as it was for a pope to interfere in civil government. His refutations sprang from his belief that kings were God-ordained more surely than were popes. The maintenance of this idea by Englishmen as a nation was critical to the survival of the monarchy, and a picture of the pope as Antichrist bolstered the king's position at home and gave his arguments abroad more weight.

James Stuart (1556-1625) was born in Scotland into the midst of Catholic-Protestant conflict which dictated the turns of his life. The forced abdication of his mother, Mary, Queen of Scots, brought him as a baby to the throne of Scotland. His subsequent Protestant upbringing made him acceptable to the English after Elizabeth's death in 1603; likewise, the English throne was acceptable to James, even though Elizabeth had ordered his mother's execution in 1587. Both nations whose thrones he occupied were at one time divided by major religious struggles with the Catholic Church and were accustomed to hearing the pope and his influence labeled "Antichrist." As king he used the same label to secure his supreme position. Before he left Scotland, he had written "The Trew Law of Free Monarchies" in

which he defined his view of the king's office:

Kings are called Gods by the propheticall King David, because they sit vpon God his Throne in the earth and haue the count of their administration to giue vnto him.⁶⁵

On coming to reign in England, he found it necessary to enlarge his defense of the monarchy because, from James's viewpoint, the claims of the papacy conflicted with his own as king and were ultimately aimed at usurping the supremacy which James felt was his God-given right. His task in these political essays was to prove that his religion, rather than the Catholic religion as it existed in the sixteenth century, emanated directly from the early Church and that the papacy of his day opposed the principles of the early Church, making the Roman church Antichrist:

James to defend his faith had not only to prove it true; he had also to show the falsity of doctrines not in agreement with it.⁶⁶

The divine right of kings (which James supported from the Scriptural account of how God gave the Jews a king)⁶⁷ was one of James's most basic beliefs. He attempted to show how the pope set out to thwart the will of God in England by claiming superiority over earthly rulers. James knew that his life as well as his position might be at risk; more than one English writer accused priests and Jesuits of teaching that the pope had the right and duty

to depose a heretical king anywhere in Europe and that subjects were released from any allegiance to such a monarch.⁶⁸ The struggle in England engaged the attention of the entire European continent because it was "the one corner of Christendom in which there was still hope of checking the onward moving tide of the Counter-Reformation."⁶⁹ When it was discovered that the Gunpowder Plot (1605) had been planned, encouraged, and nearly carried out by Catholics, Protestant writers declared that some English Catholics had taken their release from allegiance to the King to its furthest extension and had actually planned to destroy, not only the king, but as much of the government as possible (above, p. 147).

King James found himself in a contest with some of the best minds in the Roman Church:

The Jesuits . . . carefully planned every move . . . It was a carefully planned campaign for the conquest of intellectual Europe in which every move of the enemy was met by a counter move carried out by the method and the men best adapted to make it effective.⁷⁰

James was not happy to be disputing with cardinals, who were the ones designated to answer his sallies:

. . . I was neuer the man, I confesse, that could thinke a Cardinall a meet match for a King: especially, hauing many hundreth thousands of my subiects of as good birth as hee [Cardinal Bellarmine].⁷¹

Yet he saw the importance of winning the dispute for himself and for every other monarch in Europe:

How they [popes] are now come (I say)
to the toppe of greatness, I know not:
but sure I am, Wee that are **KINGS** haue
greatest neede to looke vnto it.⁷²

James wrote many refutations of works by Cardinals Coton, Perron, and Bellarmine, in the course of which he expressed his belief that the pope was Antichrist. The best discussion of this matter occurs in "A Premonition," or preamble, to his "Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance" in which he identifies the time, seat, and person of Antichrist. He believed that "S. Paul in the 2. to the Thessalonians doeth vtter more clearely that which Saint John speaketh more mystically of the Antichrist."⁷³ He followed those earlier writers who combined Antichrist with the beasts and any of the other names referring to the beasts. The time of Antichrist, James said, is during a period of defection from the truth; the seat of Antichrist is in the temple of God; and the person of Antichrist is that Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition.⁷⁴ Later, he became more specific, saying the time began with 276 A.D. and continued to his day,⁷⁵ the place is Rome,⁷⁶ and the person is the pope:

Thus hath the Cardinals shamelesse wrest-
ing of those two places of Scripture . . .
animated mee to prooue the Pope to bee

THE ANTICHRIST . . . and this opinion no
 Pope can euer make me to recant, except
 they first renounce any further meddling
 with Princes.⁷⁷

Though James's writings are long and detailed, they are inventive and at times humorous. His list of synonyms for transubstantiation includes "Cake-incarnation," "broaden-God," and "the blind Sacrament."⁷⁸ His humor is seen in his description of Cardinal Perron: ". . . he . . . dischargeth maledictions like haile-shot."⁷⁹ At times his language is poetic: ". . . the blind Sacrament or vaine fantasie of auricular confession, are no more conueyed [conveyed] into the Church by pipes from the spring of sacred Scripture or from the riuers [rivers] of the ancient church than that other point . . ."⁸⁰ In another place he says:

Let not the foolish heate of your
 Preachers for idle Controuersie . . .
 teare asunder that Mysticall Body,
 Whereof ye are a part, since the
 very coat of him whose members wee
 are was without a seame.⁸¹

In this excerpt James is urging his fellow European monarchs to join with him in united resistance to the encroachments of Catholicism, which were to him the power of Antichrist.

King James did not end the English controversy with Rome, but he established the line of Protestant resistance against Rome's claim to temporal supremacy which finally

resulted in the Revolution of 1688, an important landmark in Catholic-Protestant relations in England:

Only because neither party could subdue, exterminate, or banish the other was toleration the result of the Revolution of 1688.⁸²

James's writings confronted the papacy with high-level arguments that demanded concrete answers rather than evasive references to holy mystery or venerated custom. He successfully maintained the right to supremacy for England's secular monarch over the foreign prelate. His thinking helped form the political climate that eventually, by the end of the seventeenth century, reserved the English throne for decidedly Protestant monarchs.

James's experience with Antichrist was more than theoretical. In 1612, he ordered Bartholomew Legate to be burned at Smithfield for persistently denying the deity of Christ. King James personally remonstrated with him more than once during his imprisonment, but when Legate proved intractable, he was condemned. Legate was the last Englishman to die for religious reasons.

The secular writers considered above exemplify various facets of the English Renaissance. The ones who generated comic Antichrists for entertainment ended the usefulness of the figure as a fear-producing instrument and added a minor figure to comedy. Just as the feudal system had died

out of England, so spiritual and intellectual feudalism gave way to these writers. No longer did Englishmen write mainly in Latin--that language imbedded in the Roman Church; their native tongue proved entirely adequate for the production of books and dramas demanded by an increasingly literate English nation. A national cohesion, beginning with Elizabeth's defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588) and continuing in the development of the Anglican Church, produced the pride and confidence that gradually put together an empire. The growing popularity of secular literature was proof that the preeminence of the clergy and their concerns was receding and nontheological interests and pleasures were increasingly permeating English thought.

Notes

¹Christopher Marlowe, Edward the Second, in The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe, ed., Irving Ribner (New York: The Odyssey Press, Inc., 1963), p. 294, ll. 96-100.

²Thomas Kyd, The Works of Thomas Kyd, ed., Fred Boas (London: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1901), p. 341.

³John Donne, The Complete Poetry of John Donne, ed., John T. Shawcross (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), p. 253, ll. 21-24.

⁴Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., IX, 228.

⁵Here Begynneth the Byrthe and Lyfe of the Moost False and Deceytfull Antechryst (1550?) (University Microfilms, Reel 21, 1938).

⁶Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. A3^r.

⁷Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. A3^v.

⁸Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. A4^v.

⁹Nathaniel Hawthorne, "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," in The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne, ed. Norman Pearson (New York: Random House, Inc., Modern Library ed., 1937), p. 1216.

¹⁰Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. A3^r.

¹¹Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. A4^r.

¹²Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. B1^r.

¹³Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. B2^v.

¹⁴Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. B3^v.

- ¹⁵Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. B2^r.
- ¹⁶Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. B3^r.
- ¹⁷Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. C1^v.
- ¹⁸Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. D2^v.
- ¹⁹Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. A6^r.
- ²⁰Sacra Biblia, Gutenberg ed., II, Eccl. 4.
- ²¹Here Begynneth the Byrthe, sig. A6^r.
- ²²Pasquine in a Traunce, trans. by W.P. (1556?)
University Microfilms, Reel 213, 1944).
- ²³Pasquine, sig. B2^v.
- ²⁴Pasquine, sig. B3^v.
- ²⁵Pasquine, sig. B3^r.
- ²⁶W.P. is tentatively identified as William Phiston
(fl. 1570-1659) in The National Union Catalog of Pre-
1956 Imprints, CXXIX, 586.
- ²⁷Pasquine, sig. Dd4^r.
- ²⁸Pasquine, sig. A4^v.
- ²⁹Pasquine, sig. A4^v.
- ³⁰Pasquine, sig. B1^r.
- ³¹Pasquine, sig. B1^v.
- ³²E. Cobham Brewer, The Reader's Handbook (Philadelphia:
J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1881).

- ³³Pasquine, sig. A1^r.
- ³⁴Pasquine, sig. C4^v.
- ³⁵Pasquine, sig. E1^v.
- ³⁶Pasquine, sig. E2^v.
- ³⁷Pasquine, sig. E3^v.
- ³⁸Pasquine, sig. G2^v.
- ³⁹Pasquine, sig. H3^r.
- ⁴⁰Robert Crowley, Fryer Iohn Frauncis of Nigeon in Fraunce (1586) (University Microfilms, Reel 213, 1944).
- ⁴¹Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XII, 380.
- ⁴²Pasquine, sig. I1^v.
- ⁴³Pasquine, sig. T3^r.
- ⁴⁴Pasquine, sig. X1^v.
- ⁴⁵Pasquine, sig. T1^v.
- ⁴⁶Pasquine, sig. X4^r.
- ⁴⁷Pasquine, sig. Y1^r.
- ⁴⁸Sir John Harington, Nugae Antiquae, ed. Henry Harrington (London, 1779; rpt. Hildesheim: George Olms Verlags Buch Handlung, 1968), p. 274.
- ⁴⁹Harington, Nugae Antiquae, p. 274.
- ⁵⁰Harington, Nugae Antiquae, p. 275.
- ⁵¹Harington, Nugae Antiquae, p. 274.

⁵²Sir John Harington, A New Discourse of a Stale Subject, Called The Metamorphosis of Ajax, ed. Elizabeth Donno (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 263.

⁵³Sir John Harington, "Of Two Religions, in Sixteenth Century English Poetry, ed. Norman E. McClure (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1954), p. 582.

⁵⁴Ben Jonson, ed. Charles H. Herford and Percy Simpson (London: Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1925), I, 2.

⁵⁵Herford, I, 19.

⁵⁶Herford, I, 41.

⁵⁷Herford, I, 141.

⁵⁸Herford, I, 151.

⁵⁹Ben Jonson, The Alchemist, ed. from the Quarto of 1612 by Henry deVocht (Louvaine, Librairie Universitaire: Uystpruyst, publisher, 1950; rpt. in Materials for the Study of the Old English Drama, ed. Henry deVocht, Series II, Vol. 22, Vaduz: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1963). All further references to this work appear in the text.

⁶⁰Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., I, 858.

⁶¹"A True and Plaine Genealogy or Pedigree of Anti-christ, Wherein is Cleerly Discovered that Hee is Lineally Descended From the Divell" (London, 1634) (University Microfilms, Reel 1126, 1968).

⁶²The Antichristian Principle Fully Discovered (London, 1679).

⁶³John Cleveland, "A Dialogue Between Two Zealots Upon the &c. in the Oath" (1647) in Minor Poets of the Caroline Period, ed. George Saintsbury (London: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1921), III, note, p. 43.

⁶⁴Cleveland, p. 43.

⁶⁵James I, "The Trew Law of Free Monarchies," in The Political Works of James I, ed. Charles McIlwain (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1965), p. 54.

⁶⁶McIlwain, Political Works, p. xlviii.

⁶⁷James I, "The Trew Law of Free Monarchies," Political Works, pp. 56-60.

⁶⁸McIlwain, Political Works, p. xlix.

⁶⁹McIlwain, Political Works, p. lvi.

⁷⁰McIlwain, Political Works, p. lviii.

⁷¹James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 111.

⁷²James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 128.

⁷³James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 129.

⁷⁴James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 129.

⁷⁵James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 140.

⁷⁶James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 130.

⁷⁷James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 149.

⁷⁸James I, "A Defense of the Right of Kings, against Cardinall Perron," Political Works, p. 239.

⁷⁹James I, "A Defense of the Right of Kings, against Cardinall Perron," Political Works, p. 173.

⁸⁰James I, "A Defense of the Right of Kings, against Cardinall Perron," Political Works, p. 239.

⁸¹James I, "A Premonition," Political Works, p. 159.

⁸²McIlwain, Political Works, p. lxxix, quoting John Figgis in From Gerson to Grotius, p. 142.

⁸³Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XIII, 875.

SECTION SIX
WRITERS' SOLUTIONS FOR 666 PUZZLE

The beast of the Revelation whose characteristics made up the greater part of the Renaissance Antichrist possessed one distinction belonging to no other prophetic figure: an identification number. Revelation 13.18 says:

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

Since the second century A.D. men have speculated how this number might be historically or prophetically meaningful and have tried to determine the identity of this man-beast who would one day control the world by permitting only those bearing his mark on forehead or head to buy or sell. To solve the puzzle they turned to various ways of combining numbers and letters, arriving at successive conclusions as one solution enhanced or contradicted the others.

Pre-Renaissance Solutions

Irenaeus (b. 130?), bishop of Lyons, reportedly connected Titus, a Roman general who besieged Jerusalem

in 70 A.D., with the apocalyptic beast and proposed τεῖταν (Teitan), a variation on the name "Titan," as his preferred solution for 666¹ (below, p. 238, #1). Thomas Beard credits Irenaeus with two more solutions, both of which may have also related to the victorious Roman conqueror: εὐάνθας (euanthas) meaning "flourishing" and λατείνος (lateinos) referring to something Latin or Roman.² Since he lived before either had been developed, Irenaeus could not have had the pope or a powerful Roman Church in mind.

An early attempt to express Antichrist's identity symbolically as well as numerically developed from the idea that Antichrist was to be someone or something opposite to Christ. When the Chi Rho (✠), used as a symbol for Christ by Constantine (288?-337), was reversed, a sign for Antichrist resulted (✠). The numerical value for chi is 600, and the reversed rho becomes the letter "I" valued at ten and a place marker valued at six (below, p. 215), totaling 616, the number of the beast given in an early Codex.³

A medieval symbol for Antichrist was the word "Diclvx," or "Diclux," composed of letters which have numerical values of five hundred or less in the Roman number system.⁴ Added together, the values of these letters total 666 (below, p. 239, #7).

In The Lanterne of Ligt (1409?) the mark of the beast is said to be "a special lettir of Lisense"⁵ given by

Catholic Church officials only to those preachers whose doctrine was approved, thus preventing the Lollards and other dissenters from preaching. The Lanterne author omits discussion of the number 666.

Though all these solutions agree that the number indicated an enemy of Christ, none made any reference to the pope. It remained for Renaissance writers to transform the number 666 into letters and symbols, applying the results to specific men, and declare authoritatively that they had identified the Antichrist.

Renaissance Solutions

Renaissance writers used a Phoenician system called "gematria" to assign number values to letters of the alphabet. The first nine letters were designated 1 through 9, the next nine, 10 through 90 by tens, and the last nine, 100 through 900 by hundreds.⁶ Any word in the alphabet could thus be transformed into numbers, a procedure adopted by medieval scholars who believed that an understanding of numbers brought one as close as possible to understanding God. In his study of medieval numerology, Vincent Hopper states that medieval theologians and philosophers believed that "Arithmetic . . . is the method by which the Divine Intellect becomes intelligible per enigmata to human comprehension"⁷ and

that "a thorough analysis of the properties of the first ten numbers will reveal . . . the pattern of the universe as it exists in the mind of God."⁸ These attitudes about numbers help explain the great interest in the number 666.

Thomas .Beard

Renaissance writers adopted gematria with little change except to insert place markers where three Greek letters had been dropped from the alphabet leaving numbers 6, 90, and 900 with no letter equivalents. Thomas Beard's table was evidently the one in common use during the Renaissance:

$\alpha = 1$	$\iota = 10$	$\rho = 100$
$\beta = 2$	$\kappa = 20$	$\sigma, s = 200$
$\gamma = 3$	$\lambda = 30$	$\tau = 300$
$\delta = 4$	$\mu = 40$	$\upsilon = 400$
$\epsilon = 5$	$\nu = 50$	$\phi = 500$
$\zeta = 6$	$\xi = 60$	$\chi = 600$
$\zeta = 7$	$\omicron = 70$	$\psi = 700$
$\eta = 8$	$\pi = 80$	$\omega = 800$
$\theta = 9$	$\rho = 90$	$\xi = 900$

As an example of how this table was applied to a word, we can take the first term Beard borrows from Irenaeus, $\epsilon\upsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\alpha\varsigma$:

ϵ	$=$	5
υ	$=$	400
α	$=$	1
ν	$=$	50
θ	$=$	9
α	$=$	1
s	$=$	200
		<hr/>
		666

Beard adds his own ideas to each term taken from Irenaeus, translating εὐάνθας as "happily flourishing, . . . in a state of all pleasures,"¹⁰ because of the Biblical admonition that sometimes the wicked flourish, as will the Antichrist for a time. Beard applies this word to Antichrist for emphasis and characterization rather than for specific identification.

The second term Beard takes from Irenaeus is τεῖτον (below, p. 238, #1) which he applies to the pope because he saw similarities in heathen rites exalting the Titans and persecutions carried out by the Church.¹¹ Beard did not consider this term important except as an aid to characterization, since the passage of events had shown that Titus was not the Antichrist.

Beard favored Irenaeus' third term λατῆνος (below, p. 238, #2) as the best solution for Antichrist, going so far as to say that Irenaeus himself preferred it because he believed the last world empire would be Roman or Latin.¹² What Irenaeus could not have known fourteen hundred years earlier and what Beard considered additional corroboration, was the pope's insistence on Latin for the mass and the Scriptures. This third term proved most useful to Beard's point of view.

Beard extended the system of gematria to the European alphabet, even though the correspondences of letter to number are quite different. Reflecting his interest

in the plight of the French Huguenots persecuted by the Church during the sixteenth century, he proposed L'Ante-christ Romain (the Roman Antichrist)¹³ as a solution for 666 (below, p. 238, #5). Beard also explains that the Latin words Vicarivs Dei generalis in terris (God's Vicar-general on earth) yield 666¹⁴ if the "Diclux" values are applied to them (below, p. 239, #7). He claims these words further tie Antichrist to the pope, since they make up one of his titles.

John Swan

In the translation of Lambert Danaeus' French work A Treatise Touching Anti-Christ, John Swan proposes the words ἰταλικά ἐκκλησία (Italian Church) as a solution for 666.¹⁵ Swan is the only writer I found who mentions this way of connecting Antichrist with the Church of Rome.

John Bale

John Bale's offering for 666 consists of two words transposed by him into English: "antemos" meaning "one contrary to God's honor," and "arnume" meaning "I deny."¹⁶ The first word yields 666, but the second, as printed, only 596, lacking 70, the value of the usual "o" found on the end of Greek verbs. Perhaps it was omitted by the printers who caused Bale so many problems and should actually be "arnumeo," the letters of which give the desired

total. As strong as his anti-Catholic sentiments were, he did not suggest that the pope is indicated by these words.

Francis Potter

Francis Potter agreed with those who believed the pope to be Antichrist:

For such happy times as these, in which Christian Princes and Common-wealthes, are able and willing to stand at defiance with the Pope, and to maintaine truth to his face, these are the fittest times . . . for the manifestation of this mystery, and not heretofore, when no man in these Western Churches could affirme the Pope to be Antichrist, without apparent danger of his life.¹⁷

He was not wholly against those who chose to employ gematria in the puzzle:

. . . I will not deny but that the holy Ghost may in a second sense (as it were) indirectly and obliquely glance at the name of the Beast by this number. . . .¹⁸

But he took an altogether different position on how 666 should be interpreted, believing that gematria could not achieve full interpretation of the mystery because:

. . . no other Scriptural name is so counted.

It is not said . . . let him count the name of the beast, or the numerall letters in his name.

. . . the number of the Beast and the name of the Beast are two things plainly distinguished in the text.

. . . they that have understanding are advised by express words of the text to count the number, not the name.¹⁹

Potter's first statement is correct, and his second statement accurately refers to Revelation 13.18; but in the third statement he has disregarded the connection of the name and number of the beast made in Revelation 13.17:

. . . and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name. [Emphasis added.]

Since the word "mark" is singular, it seems as if the name and number of the beast are closely related even though they are not the same. At least, the distinction is not as plain as Potter implies.

The stated premise for Potter's interpretation of 666 is as follows:

. . . there is no way more probable, or more agreeable to reason, nor any way lesse repugnant . . . then [sic] to prosecute the grounds already laid by those, who have indeavoured [sic] to find out the mystery contained in this number, by comparing it with the number 144, to which this number 666, is (as it were) the anti-numerus, and must therefore be interpreted after the same manner, and in the same particulars applied to the Synagogue of Antichrist, as the number 144 ought to be interpreted, and as it is in the Scripture applied to the Church of Christ.²⁰

The body of the book deals with an involved numerological study of the occurrences in the Scriptures of the number 144 and its factors and multiples. For example, the New Jerusalem has 12 gates and measures 12,000 furlongs on each of four sides (Rev. 21); one important group present in the New Jerusalem will be the 144,000 who sing a new song (Rev. 14). These numbers applying to Christ's kingdom are contrasted with a similar breakdown of the number 666 applying to Satan's kingdom in the Roman Church, using the positive-negative relationship so popular with Renaissance writers. The applications are ingenious, but quite complicated. Further, they lack the slogan quality inherent in the number-name correspondence of the gematria solutions. Potter's system was not mentioned by any other writers in the study.

Nonpapal Solutions

Several solutions equate men other than the pope with the beast. Beard indignantly remarks that someone attempted to cast shame on Martin "Lauter," an alternate spelling for "Luther," by showing that the letters of his name added up to 666 (below, p. 239, #8), but he dismissed the effort as

. . . farre unbeseeing the gravity of such learned men, were not their eyes blinded with malice, . . . but these cabalistic conceits are rather flashes of overflowing wits, then [sic] sound traces of true judgement.²¹

Hill says Bishop Laud's name was proposed as a solution²² (below, p. 240, #11). Laud (1573-1645) as archbishop actively opposed the Puritans during the reign of Charles I and was the one responsible for the et cetera oath.²³ Hill also mentions that the numerical values of the words around the edges of seventeenth century coins added up to 666, causing some Puritans to look on money as evil and to believe that Christians should "neither buy nor sell."²⁴

The 666 puzzle has continued to engage men; old solutions are revived from time to time, and occasionally a new one is added. The latest, based on Egyptian numerology, assigns each letter of our alphabet a numerical value in multiples of 6 (below, p. 239, #9), the number of man according to the Egyptians. In this system, the letters in "Kissinger" add up to 666²⁵ (below, p. 239, #10), causing some interest while he was involved in the Middle East situation between Israel and Egypt. His withdrawal from public life has proved this solution as unreliable as the others.

Sooner or later most writers on this subject had to agree with a statement Irenaeus made in the second century:

It is therefore more certain and less hazardous to await the fulfillment of the prophecy than to be making surmises, and casting about for any names that may present themselves, inasmuch as many names can be found possessing the number mentioned; and the same question will after all remain unsolved.²⁶

But the concept aided the Protestants in the struggle to destroy the dominance of the Roman Church in England. The combination of numerology and classical languages would have been impressive to those with less education. Many educated persons, sincerely believing that the number referred to the pope, wrote and spoke to convince audiences that the beast had been exposed. Once the arguments were accepted, they needed support their position no further. And if one solution became unacceptable, in a short time another just as defensible would present itself.

Notes

- ¹Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., II, 101.
- ²Beard, p. 118.
- ³Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., II, 101.
- ⁴Vincent Foster Hopper, Medieval Number Symbolism
(New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1969), p. 64.
- ⁵Lanterne, p. 14.
- ⁶Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XXII, 394 and
XVI, 612.
- ⁷Hopper, p. 99.
- ⁸Hopper, p. 38.
- ⁹Beard, p. 98.
- ¹⁰Beard, p. 118.
- ¹¹Beard, p. 118.
- ¹²Beard, p. 118.
- ¹³Beard, p. 98.
- ¹⁴Beard, p. 110.
- ¹⁵Swan, p. 14.
- ¹⁶Bale, Image, sig. K6^r.
- ¹⁷Francis Potter, An Interpretation of the Number
666 (Oxford: N.P., 1642), p. 3.

¹⁸Potter, p. 3.

¹⁹Potter, pp. 2-3.

²⁰Potter, p. 4.

²¹Beard, p. 122.

²²Hill, p. 68.

²³Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed., XIII, 764.

²⁴Hill, p. 116.

²⁵Martin Gardner, "Mathematical Games," Scientific American, 230, no. 6 (June 1974), 116.

²⁶Hopper, p. 64.

SECTION SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The Roman Church had dominated England for many years before the beginning of the Catholic-Protestant struggle which was to continue for more than two centuries. As a world-wide power drawing wealth and military resources from supporting nations, the Church was not severely threatened when Wyclif first decided to enable Englishmen to read and hear the Bible. But as Wyclif's translation and the preaching Lollards gained converts who spread doctrine contrary to the Church's teachings and accusations of the clergy's corruption, the church set in motion its repressive forces. Eventually only men licensed by the local bishop were allowed to preach; objectionable books were confiscated and burned, and those suspected of supporting the dissenters were brought to questioning and threatened with excommunication. When these procedures yielded little result, the Church required legal means to invoke stronger punishment to stop the spread of heretical ideas. After Archbishop Arundel's "Constitutiones" (above, p. 109) were adopted, authors and readers of offending books could be imprisoned, and if

necessary, condemned to be executed. All of these punishments were carried out on John Claydon for his connection with The Lanterne of Ligt (above, p. 38). From the dissenters' viewpoint, Antichrist himself was moving against them.

But resistance to the Church continued to grow; and when Henry VIII no longer owed allegiance to the pope, court theologians such as Cranmer and Ridley began speaking out against Antichrist. In subsequent courts interest in Antichrist fluctuated or opinion was reversed, as in Mary's reign, but when James I adopted the idea to defend his right to the English throne, the idea of Antichrist had fairly well penetrated English society. Theological writers discussed and defined the numerous facets of the term "Antichrist" for their readers, King James politicized it, and the secular writers extracted entertainment from its various implications. Beginning with 1380 as the approximate date of Wyclif's appropriation of the term and going to 1688 when the Glorious Revolution signaled the end of the Catholic-Protestant conflict in England, the term had a life span of three hundred years.

Just how important a weapon the term "the Antichrist" proved to be can be judged from the changed course of the nation at the end of the struggle. Though many other factors contributed to the results, no other term so well symbolized or unified the principles of the conflict through

the years. In fact, I found no other term that compared to or rivaled this usage.

It should be noted that the Catholic Church changed little, if any, as a result of the dispute. The only effect on the Church was a loss of influence in England. But for England, the outcome resulted in increasing separation of civil and theological jurisdiction. By the end of the seventeenth century, no Englishman could be legally executed for religious reasons (above, p. 204). Religion had become a personal rather than a legal matter. Though the Anglican Church remained the state church, no one was compelled to belong to it. The Bible, read now by many, was interpreted individually, spawning various denominations which, though they might meet popular resistance, were not legally prohibited. Though some civil-religious relationships were at issue in the Interregnum, great advances toward a more secular government were made in the Catholic-Protestant contest before and after the Puritan episode. The outstanding seventeenth century English names are secular, not theological. The term "Antichrist" accompanied all these developments until, the issues at rest, it subsided to become a historical curiosity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Some related information which surfaced during the research for this study appeared either too extensive or too fragmentary for inclusion in the main body; however, it might provide a starting point for further investigation regarding Antichrist. Most of the material fits into one of the following categories:

1. The Catholic idea of Antichrist;
2. Catholic response to the reformers;
3. Antisemitism and Antichrist;
4. Other Renaissance works on religious problems;
5. Antichrist in art;
6. Subsequent interest in Antichrist.

The Catholic idea of Antichrist is presented in Vom Antichrist,¹ a late medieval book by an anonymous Bavarian author (Passauer) who used many of the same Scripture references as did the Renaissance reformers, the main ones being taken from 1 and 2 John, Revelation, 2 Thessalonians, and Daniel. He identifies the Roman Church in Revelation and pictures it remaining true to the faith even though its subordinate divisions fall into disobedience:

God will not come to hold his judgment
before . . . the bishoprics and other
houses of God will become disobedient to
the See of Rome.²

Passauer declares that the Antichrist will be revealed at the last time and that he will be Jewish. He describes Antichrist's birth with a strange combination of terms:

He (Antichrist) will be born of whores,
of married people of the Jewish race
and not of the devil, as some people
believe.³

His activities will include performing false miracles, leading evil disciples, persecuting his opponents, and mocking events in Christ's life held sacred by the Church. He will fulfill the role given in Revelation to the beast, as does the reformers' Antichrist. The most noticeable difference is that no reference is made to the pope or to the Church as the associate of Antichrist. In fact, by delaying the appearance of Antichrist until the end time and placing him in the Jewish nation, Passauer eliminates the papacy from suspicion. Apparently the very early idea of Antichrist sprang from an entirely different motivation than the one which gave rise to the reformers' works.

As did the Lanterne author, Passauer inserted Antichrist's name into Scripture:

"Who argues with the evil one," that is the Antichrist, "about his work, and who repays him for what he has done?"⁴

The phrases in quotation marks are accurately given from Job 21.31; the gloss is Passauer's.

The few Catholic responses to the reformers were aimed more at proving historical continuity of Catholic spiritual leadership than at refuting specific charges. Protestants easily countered these claims of unbroken lines of authority or dogma with statements from ancient Church writers who disagreed on basic issues or who wrote in direct opposition to doctrines later accepted by the Church. The Catholic Encyclopedia lists only a few Renaissance apologists, a major one being Baronius, who wrote Annales Ecclesiastici in the late sixteenth century to counter an antipapal multivolume work by Flaccius about fifty years earlier.⁵ These two Latin works are not mentioned prominently by the reformers; they may have been issued too late in the controversy to have affected it. Robert Parsons critiqued Foxe's work from a Catholic bias and amplifies our understanding of events which Foxe presents from an opposite vantage point. We know that James I corresponded with several Cardinals who held to the Church's position, but their Latin writings are not widely known. Cardinal Newman (1801-1890)⁶ wrote at least two essays on the subject of

Antichrist, but they came rather late in the conflict. If more responses exist, an examination of them might enhance our understanding of the conflict surrounding Antichrist.

Antisemitism and Antichrist are closely connected in Passauer's work by links as fanciful as the most creative productions of the reformers:

About him (Dan) he (Jacob) said: "Dan is going to be like a snake which stings the horse in the feet to make the one who sits on the horse fall down" (Gen. 49.16, 17). The Antichrist is signified by the serpent; he will come from Dan's tribe. The world is signified by the horse. The horses' feet signify the end of the world. He who sits on the horse signifies the one who became involved in this world and spread indecency and pleasure and riches and pursued them himself, and all this happens in abundance at the time of Antichrist. This same snake stings the horse . . . with all kinds of doctrines, signs, miracles, tortures and with great gifts. Why? So that the one who is sitting on the horse, that is the one who . . . is living according to the Antichrist's doctrines . . . will fall down . . . into bottomless hell.⁷

Thomas Beard also speaks of Dan as the possible origin of Antichrist and adds that in Revelation 7 where the tribes expected in the New Jerusalem are listed, Dan does not appear. Beard took this to mean that some horrible crime--perhaps the production of Antichrist--had brought about Dan's banishment. But since few popes had ever been or were likely to be Jewish, Beard mentioned this origin as a remote possibility or as a mystery.⁸

Antisemitism was expressed throughout the literature in more subtle ways. Phrases such as "synagogue of Satan" or "synagogue of Antichrist" abound, especially in Bale's King John.⁹ The much-despised friars were associated with the Jews by a clever acronym (above, p. 36) joining them to Cain who, though not a son of Abraham, appears in the Old Testament as his ancestor and the first murderer. Repeated mention is made of similarities between Catholic and Jewish ritual. Pasquine lists items occurring in both services: tithes, ornamental headbands, miters, sacrifices, offerings, perfumes or incense, and candles, along with others.¹⁰ He summarizes: "I saw all the olde Testament brought into the newe, sauing [saving] onely matrimonye,"¹¹ referring to the fact that though Jewish priests married, Catholic priests did not. Other parallels mentioned by various writers are the recurring ceremony of sacrifice, rich vestments, high holy days, and ritualistic or external forms of worship, all to the derogation of both religions. Perhaps some of the elements in Catholic worship actually did begin in the Jewish temple. The Larousse Encyclopedia of Music states: "The plainsong of the Church had its antecedents in the chants of Jewish synagogue music. . . ."¹² The parallels pointed out by Renaissance writers may have had some basis in fact; but whether or not they did, the writers used these comparisons to nourish a prejudice against Catholics from one already existing

against the Jews. Hill says that Jews were exiled from England from 1290 to 1656.¹³ Many of the persons making antisemitic comments during those years may have known very few Jews, and without anyone present to counter attacks, antisemitism was unchallenged. Chaucer's "Prioress' Tale," Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, and Marlowe's Jew of Malta all show a considerable degree of prejudice. The questions of parallels in Jewish and Catholic religious forms and the influence of related ideas on antisemitic attitudes in Renaissance England are two large areas to be explored.

Other Renaissance works on religious problems which present different or later views might add perspective to the struggles epitomized by the term "the Antichrist." John Dryden (1631-1700), writing about the religious unrest of his century, referred to familiar issues in a very rational and witty manner separating his approach from that of most of the reformers. Though he did not mention Antichrist, Dryden's view of his world would make possible a more complete evaluation of people and issues mentioned in this study. Dryden's stature and the volume of his work require that his contribution be considered separately.

Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), the scientist who formulated the law of gravity and gave us the binomial theorem and the elements of differential calculus, wrote extensively about the Antichrist and other apocalyptic events.¹⁴ As

might be expected, his book shows the detailed work of the scholar. He discusses many of the same points that had been touched during the Renaissance, but some of his explanations show the evolution of the idea of Antichrist later in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He traces medieval movements of ancient peoples on the continent in an effort to establish historical links between early tribes and nations referred to in Biblical prophecies. I was not able to examine his book on Revelation, but knowing of his contributions in other fields, I believe he had something worthwhile to say in this one as well.

Antichrist in art appears in a reproduction of a painting by Hieronymus Bosch called Adoration of the Magi (1510).¹⁵ This picture portrays the Christ Child and the Three Wisemen, as expected; but as direct counterparts it includes Antichrist and three shadowy kings who are partially hidden in a small building from which Antichrist is emerging half-dressed. The costumes and background figures express nuances which are so much a part of Bosch's work. If other artists of the period were also portraying Antichrist, a study of visual presentations would enrich our picture of how the age perceived Antichrist and all that pertained to him.

Subsequent interest in Antichrist recurs at intervals spurred mainly by political and scientific developments.

After the Renaissance, ideas about Antichrist gradually became more speculative than accusative as the figure was increasingly associated with a future time. Those who continued to believe that a pope would one day be Antichrist ceased to look on each current pope as such. Those who thought Antichrist would be someone other than a pope proposed various world leaders or even imaginary unborn persons as possibilities for fulfilling the role. Some religious denominations continued to look for an undesignated future Antichrist who would carry out the functions of the beasts in Revelation as Satan's viceroy in either Rome or Jerusalem. Current interest in occult phenomena is closely connected to the concept of Antichrist, which is part of the ritual inversions worked out in Satanic cults. Any one of these areas might yield additional insights into the mutations and influence of the idea of Antichrist.

The attention given to Antichrist in literature, and perhaps in art, indicates a general awareness of the term as an important element in the thought of Englishmen and others over at least three centuries. These few ideas may provide starting places for further study.

Notes

¹Passauer Anonymous, Vom Antichrist (15th century; rpt. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970), trans. (in part) by Rainulf Stelzmann, 1977.

²Vom Antichrist, p. 57.

³Vom Antichrist, p. 56.

⁴Vom Antichrist, p. 109.

⁵The Catholic Encyclopedia, ed. Charles G. Herbermann et al (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1913), III, 535.

⁶The Catholic Encyclopedia, I, 561.

⁷Vom Antichrist, p. 58.

⁸Beard, p. 193.

⁹Bale, Dramatic Works, p. 190.

¹⁰Pasquine, p. 40^v.

¹¹Pasquine, p. 40^r.

¹²Larousse Encyclopedia of Music, ed. Geoffrey Hindley (Secaucus, N.J.: Chartwell Books Inc., 1971), p. 52.

¹³Hill, p. 175.

¹⁴Sir Isaac Newton, Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel (London: James Nisbet and T. Stevenson, 1831).

¹⁵Hieronymus Bosch, Adoration of the Magi (1510), Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain, reproduced in Scientific American 231, no. 3 (Sept. 1974), p. 80.

APPENDIX B

GUIDE TO GEMATRIA

Greek Letter Values

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 1. \quad \tau & = & 300 \\
 \epsilon & = & 5 \\
 \iota & = & 10 \\
 \tau & = & 300 \\
 \alpha & = & 1 \\
 \nu & = & 50 \\
 \hline
 & & 666
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 2. \quad \lambda & = & 30 \\
 \alpha & = & 1 \\
 \tau & = & 300 \\
 \epsilon & = & 5 \\
 \iota & = & 10 \\
 \nu & = & 50 \\
 \omicron & = & 70 \\
 \varsigma & = & 200 \\
 \hline
 & & 666
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 3. \quad \iota & = & 10 \\
 \tau & = & 300 \\
 \alpha & = & 1 \\
 \lambda & = & 30 \\
 \iota & = & 10
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 \kappa & = & 20 \\
 \alpha & = & 1 \\
 \epsilon & = & 5 \\
 \kappa & = & 20 \\
 \kappa & = & 20
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 \lambda & = & 30 \\
 \eta & = & 8 \\
 \sigma & = & 200 \\
 \iota & = & 10 \\
 \alpha & = & 1 \\
 \hline
 & & 666
 \end{array}$$

Sixteenth Century English-letter Values:

$$\begin{array}{rcll}
 4. \quad A & = & 1 & H = 8 \\
 B & = & 2 & (I) J = 9 \\
 C & = & 3 & K = 10 \\
 D & = & 4 & L = 20 \\
 E & = & 5 & M = 30 \\
 F & = & 6 & N = 40 \\
 G & = & 7 & O = 50 \\
 & & & P = 60 \\
 & & & Q = 70 \\
 & & & R = 80 \\
 & & & S = 90 \\
 & & & T = 100 \\
 & & & V = 200 \\
 & & & X = 300 \\
 & & & Y = 400 \\
 & & & Z = 500
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{rcll}
 5. \quad L & = & 20 & H = 8 \\
 A & = & 1 & R = 80 \\
 N & = & 40 & I = 9 \\
 T & = & 100 & S = 90 \\
 E & = & 5 & T = 100 \\
 C & = & 3 & R = 80 \\
 & & & O = 50 \\
 & & & M = 30 \\
 & & & A = 1 \\
 & & & I = 9 \\
 & & & N = 40 \\
 & & & \hline
 & & & 666
 \end{array}$$

Roman Letters and Numerals

6. VICARIVS DEI GENERALIS
IN TERRIS

V = 5	D = 500
I = 1	I = 1
C = 100	L = 50
I = 1	I = 1
V = 5	I = 1
	I = 1
	<u>1</u>
	666

7. DICLVX (Diclux)

D = 500	L = 50
I = 1	V = 5
C = 100	X = <u>10</u>
	666

8. Martin Lauter (Luther) See #4 for value schedule.

M = 30	L = 20
a = 1	a = 1
r = 80	u = 200
t = 100	t = 100
i = 9	e = 5
n = 40	r = <u>80</u>
	666

9. Present-day alphabet with values in multiples of 6:

A = 6	H = 48	O = 90	V = 132
B = 12	I = 54	P = 96	W = 138
C = 18	J = 60	Q = 102	X = 144
D = 24	K = 66	R = 108	Y = 150
E = 30	L = 72	S = 114	Z = 156
F = 36	M = 78	T = 120	
G = 42	N = 84	U = 126	

10. K = 66 n = 84
i = 54 g = 42
s = 114 e = 30
s = 114 r = 108
i = 54 666

```
11.  (double v) W = 10      L = 50
          i = 1      a = --
          l = 50      v = 5
          l = 50      d = 500
                        666
```


APPENDIX C
THE CONCLUSIONS OF 1395

The basic beliefs of the Lollards and their aims in English society can be stated in the following excerpt from the much lengthier document called "The Conclusions of 1395."¹

1. Pride has replaced faith, hope and charity in the English Church as it did in the Roman Church.
2. The Priesthood, fashioned after that conferred by Rome, is not the same as the priesthood which Christ gave to his apostles, for the bishops give the crown as a symbol for the priest, the crown being the mark of Antichrist.
3. The law of chastity enjoined unto priests was given to the prejudice of women and encourages sodomy. The beginners of private religious (or monkish orders) can be blamed for originating this problem.
4. The feigned miracle (transubstantiation) of the bread induces men to practice idolatry.
5. Exorcism and benedictions practiced over wine, bread, water, vestments, and other inanimate

objects are practices of necromancy rather than of sacred divinity.

6. Spiritual and civil authority in the same leader is not conducive to good order in the kingdom.
7. Mass for the dead is a false reason for giving alms, which should be given out of charity instead.
8. Pilgrimages, prayers, and offerings made unto inanimate objects are akin to idolatry.
9. Auricular confession, said by the priest to be necessary for salvation, and feigned power of absolution, only exalt the pride of priests.
10. Manslaughter by war or any pretended law of justice for any temporal cause without a spiritual revelation is contrary to the New Testament.
11. Vows of chastity made by women cause many horrible sins, such as murder of unborn children by means of medicine, and intercourse with beasts or inanimate objects.
12. Multitude of arts nourishes waste, curiosity, and wearing of curious apparel to disguise nature.

Notes

¹Foxe, III, 203-206.

APPENDIX D

THE ACT OF THE SIX ARTICLES (1539)¹

The First Article:

That the most blessed sacrament of the altar by the strength and efficacy of Christ's mighty work (it being spoken by the priest), is present really under the form of bread and wine, the natural body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ, conceived of the Virgin Mary; and that after the consecration there remaineth no substance of bread or wine, or any other substance, but the substance of Christ, God and man.

The Second Article:

That the communion in both kinds is not necessary ad salutem by the law of God, to all persons; and that it is to be believed, and not doubted of, but that in all flesh, under form of bread, is the very blood, and with the blood, under form of wine, is the very flesh as well apart, as they were both together.

The Third Article:

That priests, after the order of priesthood received as before, may not marry by the law of God.

The Fourth Article:

That vows of chastity or widowhood, by man or woman made to God advisedly (over 21), ought to be observed by the law of God; and that it exempteth them from other liberties of Christian people, which, without that, they might enjoy.

The Fifth Article:

That it is meet and necessary that private masses be continued and admitted in this English Church and congregation; as whereby good Christian people, ordering themselves accordingly, do receive both godly and goodly consolations and benefits; and it is agreeable also to God's law.

The Sixth Article:

That auricular confession is expedient and necessary to be retained and continued, used and frequented in the church of God.

Penalty For Breaking The First Article:

. . . every such offender . . . should therefore have and suffer judgment, execution, pain and pains of death by way of burning, without any abjuration, benefit of clergy . . .

Notes

¹Foxe, V, 262, 263.

APPENDIX E

ACCESSION YEAR OF BRITISH RULERS 1327-1700¹

Edward III	1327
Richard II (grandson) ²	1377
Henry IV (grandson of Edward III)	1399
Henry V (son)	1413
Henry VI (son)	1422
Edward IV (great-great-grandson)	1461
Edward V (son)	1483
Richard III (uncle)	1483
Henry VII (great-great-great-grandson of Edward III)	1485
Henry VIII (son)	1509
Edward VI (son)	1547
Mary I (half-sister)	1553
Elizabeth I (half-sister)	1558
James I (son of Mary Queen of Scots, great-granddaughter of Henry VII)	1603
Charles I (son) (beheaded 1649)	1625
(Commonwealth)	
Charles II (son of Charles I)	1660
James II (brother)	1685

William III (nephew) and Mary II (daughter of James II)	1688
Anne (daughter of James II)	1702

Notes

¹Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of the English Language, International ed. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1961), p. 420.

²Relationship is to previous ruler.

APPENDIX F

POPE IN OFFICE 1316-1700¹

*8/7	1316	to	12/4	1334	John XXII
12/20	1334	to	4/25	1342	Benedict XII
5/7	1342	to	6/12	1352	Clemens VI
12/18	1352	to	12/12	1362	Innocent VI
10/28	1362	to	12/19	1370	Urban V
12/30	1370	to	3/27	1378	Gregory XI
4/8	1378	to	10/15	1389	Urban VI
11/20	1378	to	9/16	1394	Clemens VII
					(antipope,Avigon)
9/28	1394	to	5/23	1423	Benedict XIII
					(antipope,Avigon)
11/2	1389	to	10/1	1404	Boniface IX
10/17	1404	to	11/6	1406	Innocent VII
12/2	1406	to	7/4	1415	Gregory XIII
6/26	1409	to	5/3	1410	Alexander V
5/17	1410	to	5/24	1415	John XXIII
11/11	1417	to	2/20	1431	Martin V
3/3	1413	to	2/23	1447	Eugene IV
3/6	1447	to	3/24	1455	Nicolas V
4/8	1455	to	8/6	1458	Calixtus III
8/19	1458	to	8/15	1464	Pius II
8/31	1464	to	7/28	1471	Paul II
8/9	1471	to	8/12	1484	Sixtus IV
8/24	1484	to	7/25	1492	Innocent VIII
8/11	1492	to	8/18	1503	Alexander VI
9/22	1503	to	10/18	1503	Pius III
11/1	1503	to	2/21	1513	Julius II
3/15	1513	to	12/1	1521	Leo X
1/9	1522	to	9/14	1523	Adrian VI
11/19	1523	to	9/25	1534	Clemens VII
10/13	1534	to	11/10	1549	Paul III
2/8	1550	to	3/23	1555	Julius III
4/9	1555	to	4/30	1555	Marcellus II
5/23	1555	to	8/18	1559	Paul IV
12/25	1559	to	12/9	1565	Pius IV
1/17	1566	to	5/1	1572	Pius V
5/26	1572	to	4/10	1585	Gregory XIII
5/1	1585	to	8/27	1590	Sixtus V

9/15 1590	to	9/27 1590	Urban VII
12/5 1590	to	10/15 1591	Gregory XIV
10/29 1591	to	12/30 1591	Innocent IX
1/30 1592	to	3/5 1605	Clemens VIII
4/1 1605	to	4/27 1605	Leo XI
5/16 1605	to	1/28 1621	Paul V
2/9 1621	to	7/8 1623	Gregory XV
8/6 1623	to	7/29 1644	Urban VIII
9/15 1644	to	1/7 1655	Innocent X
4/7 1655	to	5/22 1667	Alexander VII
6/20 1667	to	12/9 1669	Clemens IX
4/29 1670	to	7/22 1676	Clemens X
9/21 1676	to	7/12 1689	Innocent XI
10/6 1689	to	2/1 1691	Alexander VIII
7/12 1691	to	9/27 1700	Innocent XII

Notes

¹Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1929 ed. XVII, 226-227.

APPENDIX G

COMPARISON OF TENURE IN MONARCHY AND PAPACY 1327-1700

(1327-1377) Edward III	John XXII (1316-1334) Benedict XII (1334-1342) Clemens VI (1342-1352) Innocent VI (1352-1362) Urban V (1362-1370)
(1377-1399) Richard II	Gregory XI (1370-1378) Urban VI (1378-1389) ¹ Clemens VII (1378-1394) ² Benedict XIII (1394-1423)
(1399-1413) Henry IV	Boniface IX (1389-1404) Innocent VII (1404-1406)
(1413-1422) Henry V	Gregory XII (1406-1415) Alexander V (1409-1410) ³ John XXIII (1410-1415)
(1422-1461) Henry VI	Martin V (1417-1431) Eugene IV (1431-1447) Nicolas V (1447-1455) Calixtus III (1455-1458)
(1461-1483) Edward IV	Pius II (1458-1464) Paul II (1464-1471)
(1483) Edward V	Sixtus IV (1471-1484)
(1483-1485) Richard III	Innocent VIII (1484-1492)
(1485-1509) Henry VII	Alexander VI (1492-1503) Pius III (1503)
(1509-1547) Henry VIII	Julius II (1503-1513) Leo X (1513-1521) Adrian VI (1522-1523) Clemens VII (1523-1534)

(1527-1553) Edward VI	Paul III (1534-1549)
(1553-1558) Mary I	Julius III (1550-1555) Marcellus II (1555)
(1558-1603) Elizabeth I	Paul IV (1555-1559) Pius IV (1559-1565) Pius V (1566-1572) Gregory XIII (1572-1585) Sixtus V (1585-1590) Urban VII (1590) Gregory XIV (1590-1591) Innocent IX (1591)
(1603-1625) James I	Clemens VIII (1592-1605) Leo XI (1605) Paul V (1605-1621) Gregory XV (1621-1623)
(1625-1649) Charles I	Urban VIII (1623-1644) Innocent X (1644-1655)
(1660-1685) Charles II	Alexander VII (1655-1667) Clemens IX (1667-1669) Clemens X (1670-1676)
(1685-1688) James II	Innocent XI (1676-1689)
(1688-1702) William and Mary	Alexander VIII (1689-1691) Innocent XII (1691-1700)

Notes

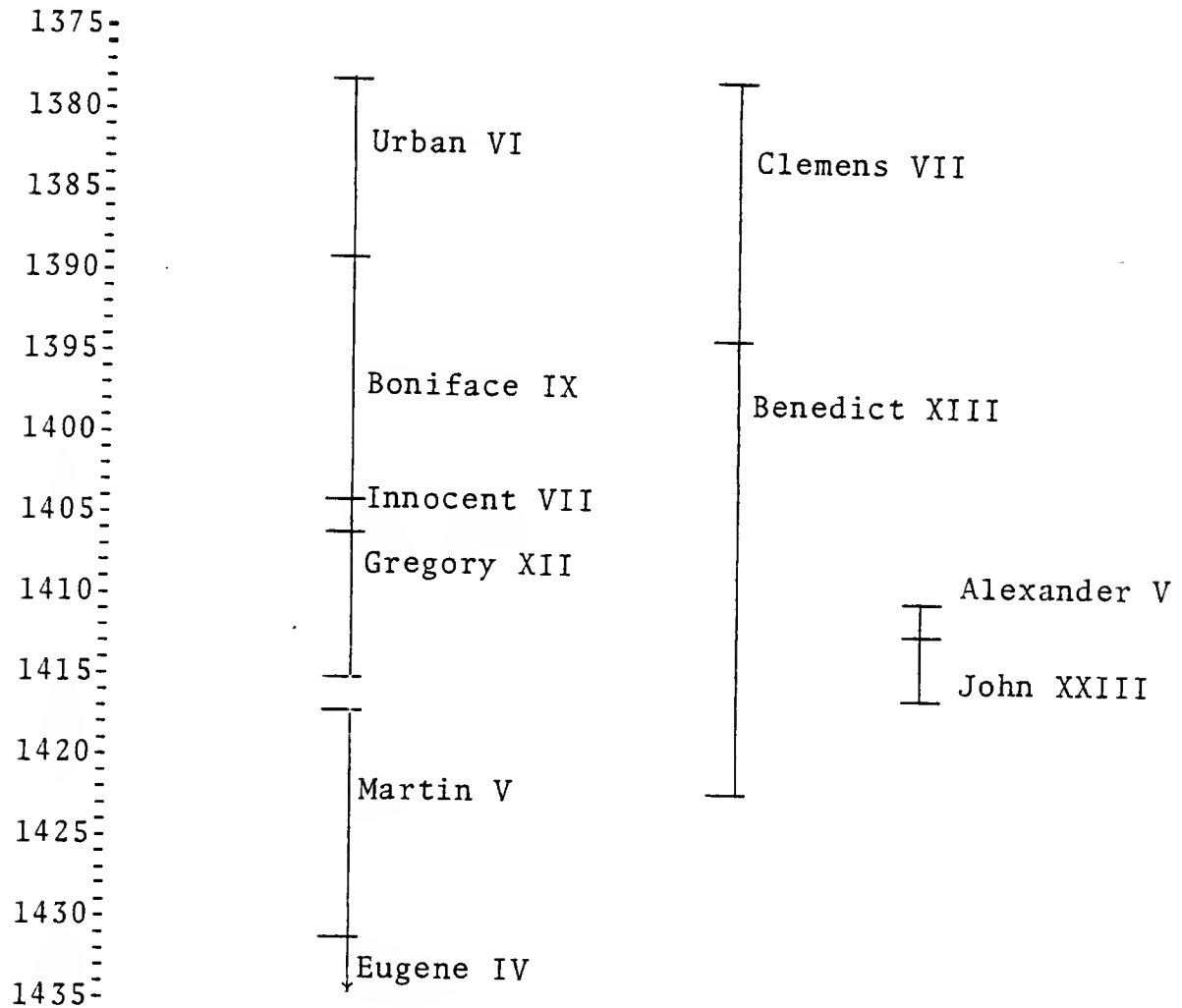
¹See Time-Line, Appendix H.

²See Time-Line, Appendix H.

³See Time-Line, Appendix H.

APPENDIX H

TIME-LINE FOR OVERLAPPING PAPAL TERMS 1378-1435



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jean Elizabeth Macfarlane was born August 26, 1926, in Palmyra, Pennsylvania, the town in which she attended both elementary and secondary schools. After graduating from high school, she completed nurses' training at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was certified as a registered nurse in 1948. Later the same year, she married David J. Macfarlane, Jr. Three children were born to this couple--David III in 1951, Bruce in 1953, and Alice in 1955. Moving to Florida with her family in 1964, she pursued liberal arts studies at the local junior college and at the University of South Florida, where she received a degree in English education in 1969 and an M.A. in humanities education in 1970. In 1980, she was awarded a Ph.D. in English from the University of Florida. She has been teaching at Clearwater Christian College in Clearwater, Florida, since 1970 except for two years (1973 to 1975) during which she attended the University of Florida full time. She presently holds the position of chairman in the Department of Language and Literature at the Clearwater Christian College.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Tommy Ruth Waldo, Chairman
Professor of English

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T. Walter Herbert
Professor of English

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



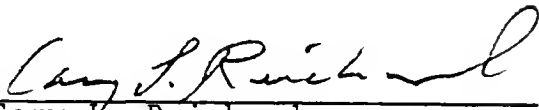
Aubrey L. Williams
Professor of English

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Sidney R. Homan
Associate Professor of English

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.


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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

June, 1980

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